DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 321 229 CS 010 140

AUTHOR Clewell, Suzanne F., Ed.; Wagoner, Shirley A., Ed.
TITLE Literacy: Issues and Practices. 1990 Yearbook of the State of Maryland International Reading Association Council. Volume 7.
INSTITUTION International Reading Association. Maryland Council.,
PUB DATE 90
NOTE 95p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055) -- Collected Works - General (020)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Elementary Education; Instructional Effectiveness; Language Experience Approach; Literacy Education; Middle Schools; *Reading Comprehension; Reading Instruction; *Reading Processes; Reading Writing Relationship; Whole Language Approach; Writing Instruction
IDENTIFIERS Educational Issues; Emergent Literacy

ABSTRACT

Intended for reading professionals, this yearbook contains 13 articles dealing with reading and allied fields divided into 2 sections: "Issues" and "Practices." The following articles focus on issues: "Wish Fulfillment and Other Dangers in Reading" (Joan Develin Coley); "Emergent Reading Research: Synthesis and Analysis" (Majorie R. Hancock); "The Role of Affect in the Reading Process" (Mariam Jean Dreher); "Pursuing the 'Wisdom of Practice' in Preservice and Inservice Reading Teacher Instruction: An Electronic Communication Approach" (Mark G. Gillingham); "Passage Dependency and Prior Knowledge: Implications for the Assessment of Reading Comprehension" (Rose Marie Codling); "Adolescents' Exploration of Intimacy through Reading and Writing" (Sheldon Russell); and "Redefining the Role and Evaluation of the Reading Professional" (Jane Brady Matanzo). The following articles focus on classroom practices: "Writing: Magic for a Five-Year-Old" (Deborah Gordon Litt); "Using the Paraprofessional to Extend Whole Language Activities" (Susan Helldorfer); "Using a Language Experience Approach with Reluctant Writers in the Middle School" (Barbara E. Walker); "Teacher Participation in a Primary Screening Project" (Patricia M. Russavage); "'Comprehension System 8': A Teacher's Perspective" (Barbara L. Eddy and Karen A. Gould); and "The Use of Signing to Reinforce Sight Vocabulary: Teachers' Perspectives" (Robert M. Wilson and Cynthia T. Bowen). (MG)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

LITERACY: ISSUES AND PRACTICES

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

L.W. KLINE

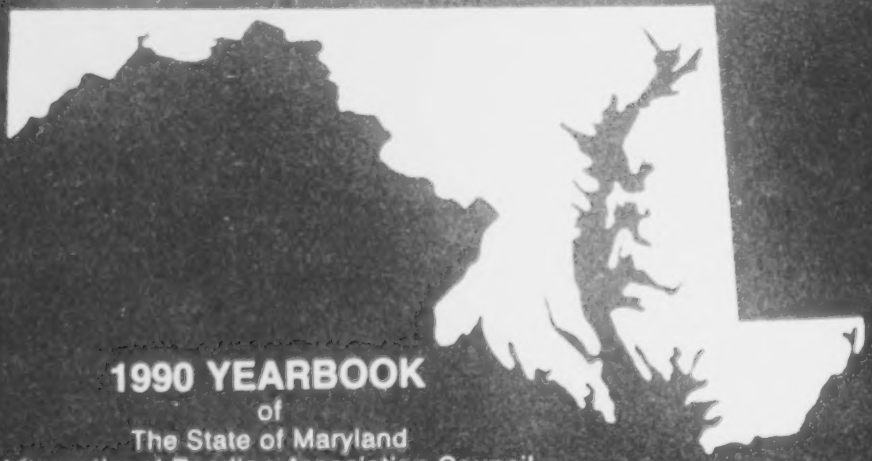
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.



1990 YEARBOOK

of

The State of Maryland
International Reading Association Council

Volume 7

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Suzanne F. Clewell, *Editor*
Shirley A. Wagoner, *Associate Editor*

INFORMATION FOR AUTHORS

Literacy: Issues and Practices is a refereed journal publishing articles of interest to reading professionals. Authors are encouraged to submit articles dealing with reading and allied fields. Articles may focus on current classroom practices or research. Manuscript length is not a consideration for publication.

MANUSCRIPT FORMAT

Any manuscript submitted to *Literacy: Issues and Practices* should conform to the following standards:

1) Manuscripts should be typewritten, double-spaced including quotes and references.
2) Manuscripts should include a cover sheet with the title, name of the author(s), institutional affiliation, and phone number.
3) Three copies of each manuscript should be submitted.

STYLE

The content, organization and style of manuscripts should conform to the standards suggested by the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, Third edition (1983). The style manual is available at most libraries or can be purchased from the Order Department, American Psychological Association, 1200 Seventeenth Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

REVIEW PROCESS

Impartial manuscript review will be conducted by the Editorial Advisory Board and the Editor. Accepted manuscripts may need to be revised for style, organization, or clarity. Manuscripts should be received by November 1.

SUBMITTING MANUSCRIPTS

Send manuscripts to:

Dr. Suzanne F. Clewell
Montgomery County Public Schools
5225 Pooks Hill Rd., 623S
Bethesda, MD 20814

Copyright 1990, SOMIRAC

The Journal of The State of Maryland International Reading Association Council (SoMIRAC)

Literacy: Issues and Practices

Editor
Suzanne F. Clewell
Montgomery County Public Schools
Associate Editor
Shirley A. Wagoner
Montgomery County Public Schools

CS010140

LITERACY ISSUES AND PRACTICES
Editorial Advisory Board
1989-90

Pam Ayres
Charles Carroll Elem. School
3719 Littlestown Pike
Westminster, MD 21157

Joe Czarnecki
Anne Arundel Co. Public Schools
2644 Riva Road
Annapolis, MD 21401

Natalie Felsher
Montgomery County Public Schools
Capt. James Daly Elem. School

Pat Russavage
Lettie Marshall Dent Elem. School
Mechanicsville, Md 20659

Joe Suhorsky
Towson State University
Towson, MD 21204

Sandra Tumarkin
Montgomery County Public Schools
Area 1 Office

STATE OF MARYLAND
INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION
COUNCIL OFFICERS

President ..... Barbara Kapinus
Vice President ..... Judy R. Johnstone
Vice President-Elect ..... Patricia K. Russavage
Corresponding Secretary ..... Nancy Longnecker
Recording Secretary ..... Joan Goodwin
Treasurer ..... Fran Haslup

Literacy: Issues and Practices **Vol. 7, 1990**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword . . . . . Barbara Kapinus

Articles

ISSUES

4 *Wish Fulfillment and Other Dangers in Reading* . . . . . Joan Develin Coley

7 *Emergent Reading Research: Synthesis and Analysis* . . . . . Majorie R. Hancock

20 *The Role of Affect in the Reading Process* . . . . . Mariam Jean Dreher

25 *Pursuing the "Wisdom of Practice" in Preservice and Inservice Reading Teacher Instruction: An Electronic Communication Approach* . . . . Mark G. Gillingham

32 *Passage Dependency and Prior Knowledge: Implications for the Assessment of Reading Comprehension* . . . . . Rose Marie Codling

38 *Adolescents' Exploration of Intimacy Through Reading and Writing* . . . . . Sheldon Russell

42 *Redefining the Role and Evaluation of the Reading Professional* . . . . . Jane Brady Matanzo

PRACTICES

47 *Writing: Magic for a Five-Year-Old* . . . . . Deborah Gordon Litt

59 *Using the Paraprofessional to Extend Whole Language Activities* . . . . . Susan Helldorfer

63 *Using a Language Experience Approach with Reluctant Writers in the Middle School* . . . . . Barbara E. Walker

66 *Teacher Participation in a Primary Screening Project* . . . . Patricia M. Russavage

70 *"Comprehension System 8," A Teacher's Perspective* . . . . . Barbara L. Eddy, Karen A. Gould

77 *The Use of Signing to Reinforce Sight Vocabulary: Teachers' Perspectives* . . . . . Robert M. Wilson, Cynthia T. Bowen

81 *Book Reviews*

Foreword

As I sit down to write this message, the world as we know it is undergoing revolutionary changes. Some of the most dramatic events of our times are taking place in Eastern Europe. The Berlin Wall has broken down, both the concrete and the concept, and through the gap has flowed a flood of demands for freedom fed by the melting of Eastern European oppression. This tide of events brings not only hope and joy, for some it is a source of uneasiness and uncertainty. For all, however, it signals a step toward a closer world community, one where the thoughts and deeds of individuals from vastly different backgrounds can have world-wide effects. For us, as literacy educators, these events should cause us to reflect on our roles in this evolving world.

First, the role of literacy itself remains critical in forming thought, communicating ideas, and considering world events. Technology can transmit news via radio and television, but it is still through news articles, editorials, and books that we can, at our leisure and in a thoughtful mode, examine events and construct for ourselves, not relying on a commentator, the meaning of what is happening around us. For those of us who seek to preserve our freedoms, this is no less essential an activity than for those who struggle to make sense in worlds distorted by tyranny. Writing still gives a unique voice to conscience and dissidence, a phenomenon acknowledged today even in Russia where hundreds, including the powerful, offer homage to Andrei Sakharov, whose writing helped keep truth and hope alive for the oppressed.

What then does this mean for us as we work in our schools and our classrooms? We know literacy is important, essential for the well being of individuals and humankind, and that knowledge motivates and sustains us as we work in schools and classrooms. However, I believe that all too often we lose sight of what is beyond the classroom—the literacy of others in the world and our own literacy. I believe that we are doing wonderful things in our classrooms in Maryland, but I would propose that we can do better by widening our vision and committing energy beyond the classroom. The results will ultimately enrich the literacy of our students and the world in which they will live.

When I think of the problems related to literacy in the world outside of our classrooms, their magnitude appears overwhelming and it seems futile to even try to do something. However, on consideration, several courses of action could be effective in addressing some problems.

In urban and economically depressed areas in our state there is a great need not only to help develop the literacy of adults in the community but also to help parents learn how to support the literacy growth of their children. Programs have been designed in other states to help mothers on welfare develop their reading proficiency by reading to their young children. Such programs would be excellent projects for local reading councils. Some councils might even collaborate on one of these projects. By working with parents on projects to promote both their literacy

and the literacy of their children, we are starting to develop the literacy of our future students.

Much farther away, in South Africa, there is another kind of literacy problem, a situation where a people's literacy and thus their political power are limited by denying them access to books. In recent letters from South Africa, educators there have described an appalling lack both of textbooks in classrooms and reading materials for libraries. Literacy educators in that country are also struggling to keep themselves informed of effective approaches to literacy education. With very little effort and at a small cost, we can begin to support the efforts of African educators in South Africa, first by simply providing memberships in the IRA. If each reading council in Maryland sponsored a comprehensive membership for at least one African teacher in one African school it would begin to make a difference. If each reading council in Maryland sent just one box of good, quality children's and adolescent books to an African school it could make a difference. Our efforts today to lend support to the literacy of the African people of South Africa can ultimately lead to a better world for our students tomorrow.

The other aspect of literacy outside of our classrooms involves an entirely different focus, ourselves. As I listen to teachers and educators whom I admire, I am increasingly convinced that a teacher's own continued literacy growth is a key factor in the richness of the literacy envisioned by that teacher for students. We can learn a great deal about how students develop their literacy by watching and listening to them. However, we also need to watch and listen to ourselves in order to continue to grow in our understanding of literacy, how it is nurtured, and how it changes with time, maturity, and experience.

It is not sufficient for us to read; we need to try new authors, new genres, and new purposes for reading. If you have not read a book on religion or philosophy or psychology since undergraduate school, you might consider one of these as a challenge. Think about how you use your background knowledge as you read. What do you carry away from the book? What does it tell you about how and why your students might read?

In the area of fiction, try a new author or a new type of novel. Think about your reactions to the book. What aspect of the book had the greatest effect on you? What would you like to tell a friend about that book? What do your responses tell you about how your students might respond to a novel? What can you do to allow them to take the same experiences from their reading?

For those who believe that they could use some suggestions for personal reading, here are some possibilities related to the topics of this message. If you are interested in considering the role of literacy in third world countries or the communities of the disempowered, its issues, and how it might be improved, consider *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* by Paulo Friere (a classic) or *Literacy* by Paulo Friere and Donaldo Macedo. For those interested in the reflections of others on literacy in general and their own literacy, the following books are starting points. *The Web of Meaning* by Janet Emig, *The Making of Meaning* by Ann E. Berthoff, *Wordstruck* by Robert MacNeil, *Windows* by Jennifer James, *The Gates of Excellence* by Katherine Paterson, and *One Writer's Beginnings* by Eudora Welty. As you read, you might keep a log of your reflections on your reading and on yourself as a reader.

You may find in this activity a deeper, more personal understanding of the link between reading and writing and the importance of exploring one's response to reading through writing.

The essence of my message then is to encourage you to promote the growth of literacy by reaching—both outward toward the world and our communities, and inward toward the soul of your own literacy. Be not only literacy educators but literacy explorers, literacy promoters, literacy sharers, and literacy visionaries. A. J. Maste said, "There is no way to peace. The way is peace." I propose, there is no way to literacy; the way is literacy. It is an essential path in our changing world.

Barbara Kapinus
1989-90 President
SoMIRAC

LITERACY: ISSUES AND PRACTICES, Volume 7, 1990

Wish Fulfillment and Other Dangers in Reading

Joan Develin Coley
Western Maryland College

Someone much wiser than I am once observed, "Be careful what you wish for or you may get it." That seems like good advice to me at least as it applies to the latest "hot" phenomenon on the reading scene—whole language. The term itself has been bandied about to such an extent that it is almost meaningless. The term *whole language* reminds me of that wonderful quote from Humpty Dumpty in *Through the Looking Glass*, "When I use a word it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less." But my concern about the imprecision of the term *whole language* is far overshadowed by what I see and fear is occurring in classrooms which define themselves as whole language classrooms.

Am I against whole language? Of course not. It would be like being against motherhood and apple pie. Who can be against an environment which is print rich, where reading and writing support each other and where the love of literature is preeminent? Who can argue with the notion that learning should take place in meaningful context, that reading growth should be built on a foundation which recognizes the primacy of the child's own language, and that learners should become part of a literate community? Isn't this what lots of us in reading have wished for over the past decades? Yes it is, and that is why I don't want this movement—if movement isn't too optimistic a term—to fail. Along with many others, part of my soul is invested in many of the notions espoused under the whole language banner. So what's the problem?

One of the most exciting parts of whole language is seeing students reading good children's literature. Teachers seem eagerly to have thrown away the basal (at least part of the time) in favor of literature. What could possibly be wrong with that? I suppose my concern stems from what some teachers do with that literature book and what other teachers don't do at all. What some teachers are able to do is "basalize" the literature book. It is quite possible to chop up the literature book into little chapter-sized chunks and proceed with a teacher-dominated discussion (or more appropriately assessment session) which resembles the exact type of rapid fire questions which we have learned to disdain in basal readers. Or did you know that is is possible to buy lesson plans to use with literature books? That way teachers need not go to all the trouble of helping students relate the literature to their own needs and experiences. Even the vocabulary is preselected so that teachers can slap the list of words up on the board and have students look them up

in the dictionary! One principal lamented to me, "If I see one more lousy lesson on *Charlotte's Web*, I think I'll gag." I guess the moral of the story is that it is perfectly possible to ruin good literature; college professors have been doing it for years. The flip side of the coin is those teachers who do nothing with the literature. After all, the idea is to read it. Children need to be exposed and nothing more. Of course, there are benefits to sustained silent reading, but few would argue that this should constitute the bulk of a literature program. Sustained silent reading is not whole language instruction.

Then, of course, there is the problem with skills. As anyone who has read a journal knows, we don't do skills any more—we do strategies. This is a great notion and comes at a time when most of us were attacking the isolated skill/drill lessons which seemed to dominate reading instruction for the past few decades. In no way would I ever advocate an approach which even hints at a return to that mode. But what do we as responsible educators and consumers of research do with all of the research on phonics, for instance? Phonics has become such a maligned entity that I now refer to it as the "p" word lest my colleagues hear me actually say it out loud. No one has a stronger disdain for the "p" word than I. In fact, in years past I could assume that any student who entered the Reading Clinic at Western Maryland College had plenty of background in phonics. As soon as a child began to experience reading difficulty in school, the knee jerk response was to give him/her immediate and intense instruction in phonics. That meant that any child entering the Clinic had already been fed a steady diet of digraphs and silent "e" rule, so I felt comfortable banning phonics instruction from the Clinic. My secret fear is that this will no longer be true, and I will actually have to allow phonics back into the Clinic!

Of course, I am aware that the whole language gurus like Goodman and Smith claim that kids will be able to internalize phonic generalizations as they deal with sensible print. But as I read the research, I keep reaching the inescapable conclusion that at least in the early stages of reading, knowledge of sound/symbol relationships and generalizations about decoding have a positive effect on reading achievement. This research base stretches from the First Grade Studies (Bond and Dykstra, 1967) through Chall (1983) to the meta-analysis presented recently by Stahl and Miller (1989). Can we afford to ignore the weight of this evidence entirely as we wait to see what the effects of whole language instruction may be on this generation of readers? I think not. I would prefer to err on the side of caution and assume that attention to certain aspects of decoding and the whole language approach need not be mutually exclusive. No, I do not advocate decontextualized worksheets, but what is wrong with attention to letter/sound correspondence within the context of a story? Is it possible to discuss rhyming words within the context of the chants that are so frequently a part of the whole language classroom? And isn't it possible that the most efficient way to deal with some of the issues in decoding would be to turn to a direct instruction model? Or do we ignore the considerable body of evidence which supports that also (Rosenshine, 1986)?

Finally, I have a fear that whole language like language experience may fail before it may fall of its own weight. My observation about language experience was that teachers could love the idea of it, but became overwhelmed by the knowl-

edge base required to implement it effectively. They became concerned that kids were missing "skills" that they needed to progress in reading and often felt powerless in terms of both time and energy needed to ensure that students made at least the same progress which they had made with basal readers. Now that many teachers have become convinced that they don't need to worry about "skills" because kids will internalize them naturally in the same way they internalize spoken language conventions, their questions center on what kinds of experiences to provide. They spend many hours planning new lessons based on literature and authentic literacy experiences. They spend countless hours responding to dialogue journals, and they spend lots of time in conferences with children. Whole language implementation takes time, effort, and risk. Many teachers are willing to devote all three of these elements because the payoffs, at least in terms of student response, seem well worth it. But there are also many teachers who will not willingly devote the time and effort needed to make such programs work. With such teachers are we better off encouraging them to simply use a basal because there is at least a format to follow? And what about teachers with a poor knowledge base? Are they not better off in a basal reader where there is at least some research base for the instruction? Is it wise to leave them to their own devices when their knowledge of the reading process is so limited?

So, here we are now, and we got much of what we wished for. We have an approach which offers tremendous promise. But despite the inflated claims of what whole language has to offer us, it isn't magic. In the hands of novice, uncommitted, or poorly prepared teachers it may be worse than whatever we abandon to adopt it. Even in the hands of committed teachers we should be careful what we discard from our current repertoire. We need to be wary of chucking years of research for an unproven idea, even one which embodies much of what we believe about the teaching of reading. It seems to me that the best way to make something work is to proceed with both enthusiasm and caution. The best way to make all the good elements of whole language fail is to first proclaim that it is "the answer" and then demand that all follow quickly.

REFERENCES

Bond, G. L., & Dykstra, R. (1967). The cooperative research program in first grade reading instruction. *Reading Research Quarterly, 2*(4), 5-142.

Chall, J. S. (1983). *Learning to read. The great debate* (2nd ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.

Rosenshine, B. V. (1986). Synthesis of research on explicit teaching. *Educational Leadership, 43*(7), 60-69.

Stahl, S. A. & Miller, P. D. (1989). Whole language and language experience approaches to beginning reading: A quantitative research synthesis. *Review of Educational Research, 59*(1), 87-116.

LITERACY: ISSUES AND PRACTICES, Volume 7, 1990

Emergent Reading Research: Synthesis and Analysis

by
Marjorie R. Hancock
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, Illinois

INTRODUCTION

Research in early reading in the past several years has witnessed a shift in emphasis toward investigating the reading competence of children before entering school and redefining what it means to become a reader. The result of this current research affords a new perspective for understanding the nature and importance of children's "emergent reading" during the years from birth through five. The impact of this research has been to reawaken a realization that significant reading development occurs in the child prior to formal reading instruction.

For far too long, there has been an almost universal assumption that children were ignorant about the nature and purpose of reading unless they were taught it. The overall effect of this static view was a devaluation of children's competence and an instructional emphasis on direct teaching of a systematic sequence of skills. Unfortunately, educators were misled in believing that learning to read began in a formalized school setting.

The intention of this review of research is to present and critically analyze the methodology and the findings of studies dealing with "emergent reading." An attempt will be made to inform the reader of the critical importance this research should have on early reading programs in elementary classrooms.

"Emergent reading" research will be reported in three specific areas. First, initial studies on early reading that have provided a sound framework for the concept of emergent reading will be presented. Second, a series of environmental print studies that present early exposure and understanding of print in a non-text setting will be explored. Third, research on the effects of reading to young children in their home environment will be described. Finally, an attempt will be made to suggest how the results of emergent reading research can be properly implemented and utilized in early reading programs in our schools. It is only by applications in the real world of the classroom that the results of quality research become truly purposeful.

Before proceeding with this review of research, however, the terminology of "emergent reading" warrants the tracing of its historical roots and its evolution to its current definition. "Emergent reading" is *not* to be confused with beginning

reading which is closely associated with formal reading instruction. It should *not* be associated with reading readiness which implies that a child needs to wait to begin to learn to read. Marie Clay (1972), a pioneer in examining young children's reading in light of language acquisition, rejected the concepts of prereading and reading readiness, emphasized the importance of the early childhood period, and noted important continuities between what she termed "emergent literacy" behaviors and those behaviors employed when the child is able to read independently.

The term "emergent reading" derived from research that indicated a belief that a child's reading develops "naturally." Goodman and Goodman (1979) believed that the process of learning to read was "natural" and paralleled the development of oral language. Teale (1982) attempted to devise a theory of how natural learning of reading occurs in young children. Hoskisson (1979) discussed how to learn to read "naturally" while similar implications were made by Torrey (1979) and Cohn (1981). However, the term "natural" could be challenged because it implied that any other way to read is unnatural.

The gradual explosion in the area of "emergent literacy" brought the term "emergent reading" into the spotlight. The wealth of research reported in the area of "emergent literacy" (Teale and Sulzby, 1986) has given justifiable support for this more accurate terminology.

The "emergent reader" in this discussion describes someone in the process of becoming a reader. "Emergent" is an ongoing term suggesting that children are continuously learning to read (Teale, 1987). It also indicates a general positive direction in which children are progressing. Hall (1987) found the term "emergent" particularly useful in several respects. "Emergent" implies that development as a reader takes place within a child and that responsibility for making sense of reading rests with the child. "Emergent" implies a gradual process of making sense of print that takes places over time. That for reading to emerge, something must be there initially is also implied by "emergent." The term "emergent reading" leads to a belief that if conditions are right, reading will emerge. In this context, the exploration into emergent reading research will begin.

EARLY READER STUDIES

Studies of early readers have been important to emergent reading research because they provide a significant foundation for building further research and they give strong indications of the importance of reading to children and providing a rich environment in which materials and adults are available to the child to assist reading development (Teale, 1987). Much of the research in early reading has consisted of: 1) longitudinal projects (Clark, 1976; Durkin, 1966); 2) identification of distinguishing characteristics of early readers (Briggs and Elkind, 1977); and 3) case studies of special children (Baghdan, 1984; Bissex, 1980; Krippner, 1963; Lass, 1982, 1983; Torrey, 1969).

The two large scale studies of Dolores Durkin (1966) were designed to examine the reading achievement of children who started to read before the first grade. The first study involved 49 children, chosen from over 5000 children in California. A second study was undertaken in New York where 150 early readers, chosen from 4,465 children, were identified. One criticism of these studies concerned the

method utilized to identify the subjects. Durkin identified an "early reader" as a child who could identify at least 18 words from a list of 37 words. This limited definition of an "early reading" as word identification may have limited the study. Another criticism involved the accuracy of data from interviews and questionnaires collected retrospectively.

Durkin did find that children who first read at home continued their reading achievement over six school years. She identified intelligence, curiosity, and persistence as characteristics of early readers. The presence of parents who spend time with their children, who answer their questions and requests for help, and who demonstrate the importance of reading in their own lives were found to be closely related to the development of early readers. This study has provided a foundation for more recent emergent reading research. In spite of the criticism, the study must be respected because, "longitudinal research is very difficult indeed, and it requires the persistence of a sleuth as much as it needs the skills of a researcher" (p. 16).

Facing similar criticisms is the longitudinal research of Margaret Clark (1976) of 32 teacher recommended early readers in Scotland. Much of the data on home/family factors can be questioned since it was collected retrospectively through interviews. However, Clark's research opened minds to looking at what early readers can do rather than dwelling on what deficient readers cannot do. Her findings amplified rather than contradicted previous studies of children who read early and emphasized that "Education neither begins at five years of age, nor at nine o'clock in the morning" (p. 106). This study stimulated questions and recent research delving into what reading development occurs in the child prior to entering school.

Seeking to identify distinguishing characteristics of a small sample of 33 readers, Briggs and Elkind (1977) found the two most salient characteristics of early readers to be operativity on the part of the children and a high level of academic achievement orientation on the part of parents. Subjects were identified in the same manner as Durkin (1966), suggesting similar criticism. Even more disturbing is the fact that the "lower" scores of five black subjects were omitted from the formal analysis since "it was not possible to analyze differences due to race" (p. 1232). However, studies of this type kept pointing to the home environment as a major influence on early reading, thus leading further research in that direction.

A multitude of case studies exist on early readers. A major criticism of all of these is that their findings are not generalizable to a larger population. However, when reviewing their findings as a whole, definite similarities and implications begin to emerge. Krippner (1963) studied Larry Wilson who noticed numbers, letters, and words in his environment at 18 months. By the age of three, he was reading a book of Carl Sandberg's children's poetry and using the index of a book six months later. Yet Larry placed low in reading readiness on the *Watson Reading Readiness Test* and was considered a poor risk for reading instruction. Torrey (1969) observed John, a five-year-old black child, who apparently learned to read on his own without forsaking his local dialect. John was obviously able to bridge the gap between his own language and print without formal instruction. Case studies such as these have encouraged current researchers to look more closely at individuals in the act of learning.

These singular case studies have more recently given rise to case studies studying both reading and writing at early ages. The observation of the emergence of writing before reading by Glenda Bissex (1980) on her son, Paul, has added insight into the corresponding emergence of these abilities. Bonnie Lass (1982, 1983) observed the roots of reading in her son, Jed. Marcia Baghban (1984) most recently observed the emergence of oral language, reading, and writing in her daughter, Giti, from birth to age three.

Although still limited by their singular subjects, these case studies do concentrate on the emergent abilities of each child from an "on the spot" rather than a retrospective perspective. Although parents as researchers may be criticized, case studies so detailed and extended over time would have been unmanageable for anyone other than a parent.

Cumulatively, these early reading longitudinal and case studies have revealed that young children know more about reading than we ever dared imagine. Together they have provided a foundation on which newer research on emergent reading has flourished.

ENVIRONMENTAL PRINT STUDIES

Most parents or preschoolers are well aware that their children can recognize printed words found in their environment. From the day they ask, "What does that say?" the child is aware that the print in the environment carries a message. Although parents have long noted the sign and label reading of their children, it is only quite recently that researchers have become interested in young children's environmental print reading. Research investigations of knowledge of environmental print serve as another means of exploring emergent reading.

The term "environmental print" generally excludes the world of print in books. It typically refers to "those items of print outside the home or deriving from outside the home to which there is some kind of public or general access" (Hall, 1987, p. 23). Environmental print is usually thought of as "contextualized" implying that the meaning of the print is, to a large extent, self-evident from the context that surrounds it.

Several environmental print studies have assessed how accurately children could recognize words from environmental print and determined which cues children used to recognize these words (McGee, 1986). Hiebert (1978) argued that examining children's errors as they read environmental print could provide clues about their understanding of written language. Hiebert examined what types of incorrect responses were given when forty 3- and 4-year-olds were shown slides of 10 words in environment and isolation contexts. She was careful to exclude early readers from the study. Children's errors were classified into *meaning-related, idiosyncratic, strings of words,* or *don't know.*

Hiebert's findings indicated that the younger group made more errors than the older group, that more errors were made out of context than in context, and that more errors were made on letter tasks than word tasks. However, these incorrect responses still indicated that young children had acquired knowledge about written language. Hiebert concluded even 3-year-olds regard written language as meaningful even when the exact message can't be decoded. Children develop word-to-

word correspondence between written and spoken words even at this age. An earlier study (Reid, 1966) had indicated that children did not have language understanding and needed to be taught it in beginning reading instruction. This is likely due to the fact that this earlier study presented the words and letters in traditional reading tasks and failed to uncover the knowledge children have of language in their environment.

Following Hiebert's study, several researchers examined children's concepts about reading and written language as revealed in environmental print reading. One of the most detailed reports into print awareness is that of Goodman and Altwerger (1981). Only 11 children ranging from 3-5 years of age from poor backgrounds and different racial and ethnic groups were involved, making it unwise to generalize from their findings. The researchers introduced the idea of gradually decontextualizing 18 words through three tasks. Children's style of response changed according to the demands of the task and their age. When the full context was available, they attended to the meaning. As print became more decontextualized, attention to letters increased. This finding is consistent with Goodman (1980) and her contention that the development of print awareness is one of the five "roots of literacy."

Support for this notion of development involving a number of interrelated elements was given by Hiebert (1981). Sixty 3-, 4-, and 5-year-olds were tested in conventional reading readiness measures as well as in their knowledge of the process and purpose of print. Knowledge increased significantly from the beginning to the end of the preschool period. The study failed to reveal a fixed order in the acquisition of skills and concepts but supports the notion that they are acquired in an integrated fashion. Hiebert was careful to point out that mere exposure to environmental print does not itself turn children into readers. There is no direct simple sequence from reading environmental print to reading decontextualized print. These abilities seem to develop alongside each other. Perhaps a longitudinal study could give a more complete view of the development of the numerous dimensions of print awareness.

The case study of Anna by Haussler (1985), although limited by its single subject, shows a child interacting with environmental print in a meaningful situation. Anna realized print contains meaning and demonstrated that print can be turned into speech. Anna apparently knew the function of print, the use of context in reading, the use of print cues, and the handling and use of books.

In one of the most comprehensive examinations of children's environmental reading, Harste, Burke, and Woodward (1982) examined whether children's responses to the research question, "What do you think this says?" indicated compliance with an implied request to read. In this study 48 children ranging from 3 to 6 years of age were shown print in environment, logo, and isolation settings. Over 60% of children's responses in the environment and logo settings were considered attempts to read, whereas only 29% of the responses in the isolated setting were attempts to read (McGee, 1986). However, children's attempts to read graphemically corresponded to some degree with the printed word. Harste et al. were the first to conclude that young children are sensitive to graphic as well as semantic and syntactic cues when attending to environmental print.

The research of Hiebert (1978, 1981), Goodman and Altwerger (1981), and

Harste, et al. (1982) indicated an important shift in perspective regarding learning to read. Reading was viewed as involving more than merely graphic cues. Young children's knowledge was still best displayed in full environmental context, but "this conclusion must be approached cautiously since a liberal scoring method for graphic detail was used in these studies" (McGee, 1986, p. 120).

Not all research agreed with this relationship of environmental print and learning to read. Studies by Goodall (1984), Mason (1980), and Masonheimer, Drum, and Ehri (1984) provided evidence to the contrary.

The study of Goodall (1984) attempted to assess how accurately children could recognize words from environmental print and determined which cues children used to recognize these words. Her subjects were twenty 4-year-old Australian children given 22 words in full-environment and reduced environment settings. More than 50% of their responses in full environment were correct, but only 30% of the responses were correct in the reduced environment and nearly 50% were "don't know."

Results from this study, although based on a small population, claimed to demonstrate that children could identify many words in familiar environmental print items, but that the children used environment rather than print cues to identify these words. This study's weakness was that its design, identifying words in isolation, was assessing traditional reading abilities, and it is no wonder that most of the children were not readers according to the traditional definition. Goodall questionably concluded that children were not focusing on letters and had not extracted those skills which would help them in the school reading classes.

Masonheimer, Drum, and Ehri (1984) studied 102 preschoolers to see whether context-free word reading skill evolved out of extensive experience with environmental print. The results of the first study indicate that subjects' ability to read labels in their environment stem from familiarity with context cues accompanying the labels, not from alphabetic cues. They conclude that it is not age but reading skill that reduces dependency on context clues. Since these environmental print "experts" possess little if any word reading skill, it does not appear that reading skill evolves out of environmental print experiences.

A second study was conducted to assess the impact of letter alterations on sign and label reading. Results showed that the prereaders ignored the letters and "read" the environment. The results of this study provided little support for the view that environmental print experience moves a child closer to acquiring reading skill.

In an attempt to construct a set of natural steps that children take in learning to read, Mason (1980) chose 38 children from a university operated preschool, identified a group she termed "context dependent," provided some informal reading instruction, and challenged them to identify 10 words. When they did not recognize the altered words, it was suggested they were not attending to graphic clues.

Mason (1980) suggested her results indicated a natural hierarchy of word reading. The first level is recitation, the naming and printing of letters. Then signs and labels are read. Finally, sound and print are related to read words. Mason's work, however, derives from a view of reading bound to word identification. It is

probable that her hierarchy was produced as a result of presenting children with words of no immediate sense to them. Her findings are limited.

In spite of some dissent in the research, it is apparent that children make use of environmental print. The child becomes aware that print in the environment carries a message. The knowledge accumulated about environmental print can be used to foster an understanding of written language. The emergence of reading is strongly facilitated by the rich world of environmental print.

HOME ENVIRONMENT: PARENTS AND CHILDREN READING TOGETHER

Research in the development of children who learned to read before formal schooling has implicated home environment, particularly parents and children reading together, as a major contributing factor in early reading (Clark, 1976; Durkin, 1966). More recent emergent reading research observing children and parents reading together have shown results indicating four major findings:

1) Children show reading-like behaviors during parent-child reading interactions long before children read conventionally (Doake, 1985; Sulzby, 1985a, 1985b).
2) Cultural differences can be found in home environment and parent-child storybook reading interaction (Heath, 1982, 1983; Teale, 1978, 1981, 1986).
3) Social interaction plays an important role in negotiating meaning during story reading (Ninio and Bruner, 1978; Snow, 1983; Taylor, 1983, 1986).
4) A strong relationship exists between reading to preschoolers and learning to read (Moon and Wells, 1979; Walker and Kuerbitz, 1979).

The research in these areas will now be more carefully scrutinized for both methodology and findings. Much of this research addresses itself to the role of reading in a child's total "emergent literacy" growth, but an emphasis will be made to report findings effecting "emergent reading."

Reading-Like Behavior

A highly significant reading-like behavior seems to emerge in children as a result of parents encouraging their participation as they read and reread familiar stories (Doake, 1985). Clay (1972) described this behavior as "talking like a book" and Holdaway (1979) referred to it as the process of "reenactment." Doake (1985) used the term "reading-like behavior" to describe the child's efforts to emulate the reading behavior of their parents.

Doake's examination of reading-like behavior was based on audiotapes made over a seven month period in the book-oriented homes of four preschool children. Although the study may be limited by the small number of subjects, this descriptive type of research deserves merit for its tenacity and depth of observation. From these observations, Doake described four participatory strategies that emerge as children become increasingly familiar with certain stories (pp. 86-89). "Mumble reading" is an indecipherable attempt to read along with initial readings. "Cooperative reading" implies the shared reading of the story. "Completion reading"

occurs when the reader pauses at points in the story inviting the children to complete a sentence. Finally, "echo reading" occurs as children repeat a phrase or sentence immediately after it is read to them. Reading-like behavior progresses from fluent and expressive to rhythmical as children attempt to match what they see and what they say.

One of the strengths of this study is its strong suggestion that children are actively involved in the process of learning to read. Doake strongly implies that children can begin to learn to read as soon as they are read to. Implications from these findings are extremely powerful and need to be heeded.

Sulzby (1985a) examined emergent reading-like behavior in children's reading of favorite storybooks and identified developmental trends with children's interaction with storybooks during the period leading up to conventional reading. Following two studies of 24 kindergarteners and 32 two-, three-, and four-year-olds respectively, Sulzby devised a classification scheme that seemingly orders the storybook reading attempts of young children into developmental patterns. The researcher herself points out the limitations of data from the small number of subjects and, therefore, reports them as only a beginning investigation into emergent reading. In spite of the limitations, the research characterizes children's early reading behaviors in a developmental manner and encourages further investigation. Sulzby's developmental classification scheme provides a potential tool for further research.

Cultural Differences

Two researchers, William Teale (1986) and Shirley Brice-Heath (1983, 1986), have modeled excellent ethnographic studies that delve into the cultural differences that affect both the home reading environment of the emergent reader and the parent-child interactions during reading. These ethnographic studies are exemplary of the quality of research to which the concept of emergent reading has given impetus. The meticulous observation and painstaking interpretation of data provide an outstanding model of where emergent reading research may be directed.

Teale's early research (1978, 1981), based on correlational studies, repeatedly associated positive home environment with emergent reading. He readily identified the availability of printed materials, the parents as reading models, and their responses to the child's attempts to make sense of the printed word as essential factors in the emergence of an early reader.

In Teale's San Diego study (1986) he examined home and cultural background influences on young children's literacy development by observation of 24 preschool children from low-income families (8 Anglo, 8 Black, 8 Mexican–American) over a period of 3-18 months. The methodology and analysis of this study are as important to further research as its findings. Teale's field notes and audiotapes provided data on literacy material in the home, participant structure of reading/writing activities, and the social nature of those activities. Although based on a total literacy environment, the findings of this study easily address themselves to emergent reading. One major finding is that all children, even those from low-income families, have numerous literacy experiences with print before entering school. However, parent-child reading in low-income homes is sparse, and,

therefore, may have a negative effect on the child's emergent reading potential. This implies that the school setting may need to reproduce not only the child's early exposure to print, but the close parent-child social interaction that is a vital component in learning to read.

An outstanding longitudinal study that addressed not only home, but community influences on emergent reading (literacy) was the effort of Shirley Brice-Heath (1983, 1986). The study concentrated on how children of three culturally different communities in the Piedmont Carolinas learned to use language in their homes and communities. The methodology of this five year study also set high standards and built respect for ethnographic research.

The findings are noteworthy. White non-mainstream families in Roadville exhibited story reading during the child's third year. Children were not encouraged to interact, yet participated in a questioning pattern similar to that found in school. Roadville children performed well in initial stages of reading, but declined as reading required more independence. Unlike mainstream children, they lacked the parental link of information in the text with the child's real life experiences. On the other hand, Trackton's black children were rarely participants in book reading events. They did not have experience with treating language in a decontextualized way. Heath's research provides invaluable insights into the processes and lifelong effects of parents reading to their children.

Interactive Storybook Reading

Several recent emergent reading studies have dealt with the importance of social interaction during storybook reading in effort to cooperatively negotiate meaning (Ninio and Bruner, 1978; Snow, 1983; Taylor, 1983, 1986). Although research for years has pointed out the importance of reading to children, these studies concentrate on the natural interaction process of parent and child. One of the strengths of this research is the quality methodology involved in obtaining accounts that realistically recreate a storybook occasion.

Ninio and Bruner (1978) examined videotapes of the picture book reading of mother and young child (8-18 months). Their behavior was found to be highly routine and stable involving the use of labeling. While transcribing book-reading tapes, Snow (1983) also discovered repeated routine readings to be an integral part of the interactional process between herself and her son Nathaniel. Repeated book readings provided the child an opportunity to assume aspects of the adult role in reading as well as an opportunity to learn the rules for reading referred to by Snow and Ninio (1986) as the "contracts of literacy" (pp. 121-136). Both of these studies also emphasized the importance of language acquisition during the book reading episodes.

The methodology of Taylor (1983, 1986) is particularly noteworthy in this review of interactional storybook reading. Finding videotapes unnatural and audiotapes limiting, this researcher (1986) called on the parents to collaborate with her in reconstructing the total storybook reading event from transcripts and real experience. The result are narrative accounts that capture a "prose home movie" (p. 146), a collaborative venture of writer and participants.

Reading to Children and Beginning Reading Success

Several studies have attempted to show a direct relationship between home reading and beginning reading success at school (Moon and Wells, 1979; Walker and Kuerbitz, 1979). Moon and Wells (1979) reported a small, but detailed study of home influences on the early stages of learning to read within the context of the Bristol Longitudinal Language Development Research Program. Data derived from parent interviews, recordings of spontaneous home conversations, and reading assessments were analyzed. The researchers realistically cautioned overgeneralization of the findings from the small sample of 20. The synthesis of the data reflected the fact that "children's success or failure in learning to read largely depends on parents who care enough for their children to spend time with them, and within that time, to lay the foundation of knowledge about, and positive attitudes towards, books and reading" (p. 61).

A study of storytime as a factor in beginning reading success, conducted by Walker and Kuerbitz (1979), documents greater success for children who have participated in regular storytime experiences throughout their preschool years. Although based on questionnaires sent to parents of 36 pupils, findings from the study, combined with others of a similar nature (Wells, 1985; Wells, 1986), indicate an almost certain correlation between early home reading and later school success in reading. Emergent reading research continues to be conducted to assess exactly *how* these two factors are related.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS OF EMERGENT READING RESEARCH

A review of this wealth of emergent reading literature would not be complete without a short discussion of potential practical applications from the findings of this research. In spite of what current research is telling us about the knowledge of reading that children bring to the classroom setting, schools persist in "reading readiness" testing for assessing ability to learn to read as well as phonetic drills to teach reading. Schools ultimately operate under the assumption that the child must go through a period of developing readiness skills before learning to read. However, this research review has convincingly reported that children are already actively involved in reading when they enter school. The demand for a change of perspective is eminent.

Learning to read "by reading" can become a reality in our classrooms. Doake (1985) believes that the basics to which we should be returning in the classroom are the basics established by children and parents in a quality home environment. Teachers must acknowledge the crucial importance of children's home experience with books and explore ways to bring features of the shared book experience into the classroom.

A joint statement prepared by the Early Childhood and Literacy Development Committee of the International Reading Association (1986) states, "Learning should take place in a supportive environment where children can build a positive attitude toward themselves and toward language and literacy" (p. 10). For optimal learning, reading should be a part of a total literacy program that embraces speaking, listening, writing, as well as reading. Instruction must be built on what a

child already knows about these processes. The focus must be on meaningful experiences (Bridge, 1988) rather than on isolated skill development. Using familiar materials, such as well known and predictable stories, will provide the child with a sense of continuity, control, and confidence in early reading attempts (DeFord, 1981; Fox, 1985). Time should be taken regularly both for reading to children and independent reading. Children need to be active participants in literacy experiences in order to grow and develop the roots of literacy (Goodman, 1980). The equating of success in reading and standardized test scores must be abandoned for more informal measures that take a more realistic view of what a child knows about reading (Davidson, Lia, and Troyer, 1988).

A child-centered whole language literacy program based on these principles must be introduced into the early school setting. A positive, natural environment where language, literature, writing, and reading can coexist seems to be the closest substitute for an ideal early home environment for developing total literacy.

A way must be found to spread the word to parents of the need to read to children as well as to answer their questions about reading. Models of reading in the home exemplify the value of reading to children. We must undertake to get this message to countless caring and concerned parents from all social and cultural backgrounds. The task is far from easy, but it may be the key to a more literate society.

CONCLUSION

The study of emergent reading, an integral part of the larger field of literacy development, is leading educators to rethink their notions about young children's reading potential. The first few years of a child's life are now being perceived as a time when far reaching attitudes, knowledge, and skills are developed. Research has helped us better understand the active role of the child in constructing meaning during early reading. Many unanswered questions particularly for implementing the findings of this research remain, but the opportunities for future research are eminent. The optimism accompanying the findings from emergent reading studies has revitalized interest in reading research and can only be surpassed by the unfaltering enthusiasm of young children in their persistent, natural desire to read.

REFERENCES

Baghban, M. (1984). *Our daughter learns to read and write: A case study from birth to three*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Bissex, G. L. (1980). *GNYS AT WRK: A child learns to write and read*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bridge, C. A. (1988). Focusing on meaning in beginning reading instruction. In J. L. Davidson (Ed.), *Counterpoint and beyond: A response to 'Becoming a Nation of Readers'* (pp. 51-62). Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Briggs, C. & Elkind, D. (1977). Characteristics of early readers. *Perceptual and Motor Skills, 44*, 1231-1237.

Clark, M. M. (1976). *Young fluent readers: What can they teach us?* London: Heinemann Educational Books.

Clay, M. (1972). *Reading: The patterning of complex behavior*. Auckland, New Zealand: Heinemann Educational Books.

Cohn, M. (1981). Observations of learning to read and write naturally. *Language Arts, 58*, 549-556.

Davidson, J. L., Lia, D., & Troyer, C. R. (1988). Emerging literacy: what we know should determine what we do. In J. L. Davidson (Ed.), *Counterpoint and beyond: A response to 'Becoming a Nation of Readers'* (pp. 17-26). Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

DeFord, D. E. (1981). Literacy: Reading, writing, and other essentials. *Language Arts, 58,* 652-658.

Doake, D. B. (1985). Reading-like behavior: Its role in learning to read. In A. Jagger & M. T. Smith-Burke (Eds.), *Observing the language learner* (pp. 82-98). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Durkin, D. (1966). *Children who read early: Two longitudinal studies.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Early Childhood and Literacy Development of the International Reading Association (1986). Literacy development and pre-first grade: A joint statement of concerns about present practices in pre-first grade reading instruction and recommendations for improvement. *Young Children, 10,* 10-13.

Fox, C. (1985). The book that talks. *Language Arts, 62,* 374-384.

Goodall, M. (1984). Can four year olds "read" words in the environment? *The Reading Teacher, 37,* 478-482.

Goodman, K. S. & Goodman, Y. M. (1979). Learning to read is natural. In L. B. Resnick & P. Weaver (Eds.), *Theory and practice of early reading* (pp. 137-154). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Assoc.

Goodman, Y. M. (1980). The roots of literacy. In M. P. Douglass (Ed.), *The Claremont reading conference forty-fourth yearbook.* Claremont, CA: The Claremont Reading Conference.

Goodman, Y. M. & Altwerger, B. (1981). Print awareness in pre-school children: A study of the development of literacy in pre-school children (Occasional Paper No. 4). Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona, Program in Language and Literacy, Arizona Center for Research and Development.

Hall, N. (1987). *The emergence of literacy.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books.

Harste, J. C., Burke, C. L., & Woodward, V. A. (1982). Children's language and world: Initial encounters with print. In J. A. Langer and M. T. Smith-Burke (Eds.), *Reader meets author/Bridging the gap* (pp. 105-131). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Haussler, M. M. (1985). A young child's developing concepts of print. In A. Jagger & M. T. Smith-Burke (Eds.), *Observing the language learner* (pp. 73-81). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Heath, S. B. (1982). What no bedtime story means: Narrative skills at home and school. *Language in Society, 2,* 49-76.

Heath, S. B. (1983). *Ways with words: Language, life, and work in communities and classrooms.* Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.

Hiebert, E. H. (1978). Preschool children's understanding of written language. *Child Development, 49,* 1231-1234.

Hiebert, E. H. (1981). Developmental patterns and interrelationships of preschool children's print awareness. *Reading Research Quarterly, 16,* 236-259.

Holdaway, D. (1979). *The foundations of literacy.* Sydney: Ashton Scholastic.

Hoskisson, K. (1979). Learning to read naturally. *Language Arts, 56,* 489-496.

Krippner, S. (1963). The boy who read at eighteen months. *Exceptional Child, 30,* 105-109.

Lass, B. (1982). Portrait of my son as an early reader. *The Reading Teacher, 36,* 20-28.

Lass, B. (1983). Portrait of my son as an early reader II. *The Reading Teacher, 36,* 508-515.

Mason, J. M. (1980). When do children begin to read: an exploration of four-year-old children's letter and word reading competencies? *Reading Research Quarterly, 15,* 203-227.

Masonheimer, P. E., Drum, P. A., & Ehri, L. C. (1984). Does environmental print identification lead children into word reading? *Journal of Reading Behavior, 16,* 257-271.

McGee, L. M. (1986). Young children's environmental print reading. *Childhood Education, 63*, 118-125.

Moon, C. & Wells, G. (1979). The influence of home on learning to read. *Journal of Research in Reading, 2*, 53-62.

Ninio, A. & Bruner, J. S. (1978). The achievement and antecedents of labelling. *Journal of Child Language, 5*, 5-15.

Reid, J. F. (1966). Learning to think about reading. *Educational Researcher, 9*, 56-62.

Snow, C. and Ninio, A. (1986). The contracts of literacy: What children learn from learning to read books. In W. H. Teale & E. Sulzby (Eds.), *Emergent literacy: Writing and reading* (pp. 116-138). Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Corporation.

Sulzby, E. (1985a). Children's emergent reading of favorite storybooks. *Reading Research Quarterly, 20*, 458-481.

Sulzby, E. (1985b). Kindergarteners as writers and readers. In M. Farr (Ed.), *Advances in writing research, Vol. 1: Children's early writing development* (pp. 127-199). Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Corporation.

Taylor, D. (1983). *Family literacy: Young children learning to read and write*. Exeter, NH: Heinemann Educational Books.

Taylor, D. (1986). Creating family story: "Matthew! We're going to have a ride!". In W. H. Teale & E. Sulzby (Eds.), *Emergent literacy: Writing and reading* (pp. 139-155). Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Corporation.

Teale, W. H. (1978). Positive environments for learning to read: What studies of early readers tell us. *Language Arts, 55*, 922-932.

Teale, W. H. (1981). Parents reading to their children: What we know and need to know. *Language Arts, 58*, 902-912.

Teale, W. H. (1982). Toward a theory of how children learn to read and write naturally. *Language Arts, 59*, 555-570.

Teale, W. H. (1986). Home background and young children's literacy development. In W. H. Teale & E. Sulzby (Eds.), *Emergent literacy: Writing and reading* (pp. 173-205). Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Corporation.

Teale, W. H. (1987). Emergent literacy: Reading and writing development in early childhood. In *Research in literacy: Merging perspectives*. Rochester, NY: National Reading Conference.

Teale, W. H. & Sulzby, E. (1986). *Emergent literacy: Writing and reading*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Corporation.

Torrey, J. W. (1969). Learning to read without a teacher: A case study. *Elementary English, 46*, 550-556, 638.

Torrey, J. W. (1979). Reading that comes naturally: The early reader. In T. G. Waller & G. E. Mackinnon (Eds.), *Reading Research: Advances in theory and practice* (pp. 115-144). New York: Academic Press.

Walker, G. H. & Kuerbitz, I. E. (1979). Reading to preschoolers as an aid to successful beginning reading. *Reading Improvement, 16*, 149-154.

Wells, G. (1985). Preschool literacy-related activities and success in school. In D. R. Olson, N. Torrance, and A. Hildyard (Eds.), *Literacy, language, and learning* (pp. 229-255). Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Wells, G. (1986). *The meaning makers: Children learning language and using language to learn*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann Educational Books.

LITERACY: ISSUES AND PRACTICES, Volume 7, 1990

The Role of Affect in the Reading Process

Mariam Jean Dreher
University of Maryland

The comments below were made by readers who were asked to think aloud as they read passages across several content areas:

> "I couldn't concentrate on it because I didn't feel like—I didn't know what they were talking about . . . my mind kept wandering, like to other things."
>
> "It was boring. Who cares about the molecular basis for memory?"
>
> "I don't know how much help I'll be. I'm not very good at reading."
>
> "I couldn't help laughing when I saw 'pandemonium.' I thought of the Student Union."
>
> "It's interesting. It so parallels our current elections."

Although these comments came from college students (Dreher & Singer, 1986), similar emotions, feelings, and attitudes can be found in readers at every level. Indeed, few researchers and educators would disagree that affective variables such as emotions and interest play an important role in reading. Yet cognitive researchers neglect them (Norman, 1980), reading models rarely include them (Athey, 1985), even explanations of reading failure leave them out (Johnston, 1985). Since affective variables are neglected, this paper will summarize the reasons for this neglect, examine how affect works during the reading process, and finally describe the value of focusing on affect in models of reading.

REASONS FOR NEGLECT

The failure to include the role of affect in theories and models of reading has various origins: Some researchers believe affective concepts are difficult to define (Mathewson, 1985), and others have had difficulty locating measures of affect that are relevant to reading (Athey, 1985). Perhaps even more importantly, cognitive and psychological research (including the study of reading) occurred first in a climate of behaviorism and more recently in the context of information processing—both of which tend to ignore affect.

As Norman (1980)—an eminent cognitive scientist—has pointed out, the focus on information processing has resulted in the separation of cognition and affect into distinct systems. As a result, those who study cognition tend not to address affect. Indeed, the usual assumption in models of information processing is that cognition dominates our mental functioning. This means that any actions or emotions would come *as a consequence of* our brains subjecting incoming information to a cogni-

tive analysis. In fact, Norman explains that contemporary cognitive theories are basically theories of pure reason.

Teachers and students have benefitted from this emphasis on cognition thanks to instructional insights gained from cognitive research. However, models of reading have tended to emphasize cognitive and linguistic factors while devoting little attention to affective variables such as emotion, motivation, interest, and attitude.

HOW AFFECT WORKS IN INFORMATION PROCESSING AND READING

Yet despite this neglect there do exist some attempts to address the role of affect in cognition in general and in the reading process in particular. Norman's views on cognition will first be discussed, followed by a discussion of some models of reading which shed light on affective issues.

A Cognitive Scientist's View

Norman (1980) argues that psychologists are wrong when they put cognition at the center of their attempts to understand human behavior. He questions the idea that there is a pure cognitive system through which incoming information is channeled. Instead, he argues that emotion plays a central role in behavior, even in supposedly pure cognitive functions such as memory. In fact, it seems likely that emotion is the force that leads to other activities and is, therefore, of critical concern to those who seek to understand comprehension.

According to Norman, it is more likely that biological structures, which he terms the regulatory system, have primacy over the cognitive system; in other words, "the cognitive system is apt to be the servant of the regulatory system, not the other way around" (1980, p. 11). Furthermore, the emotional system is involved in the interaction between the cognitive and regulatory systems. Indeed, Norman argues that in contrast to models which emphasize cognitive processes, "It may well be that it is the cognitive component that is subservient, evolved primarily for the benefit of the regulatory system working through emotions, through affect" (1980, p. 1).

Obviously, from Norman's viewpoint, a full understanding of cognitive functioning is impossible if researchers look at only a so-called pure cognitive system. To do so would be to ignore many critical aspects of the human mind's functioning, including affect. Likewise, teachers in trying to teach students to read and learn from text must also go beyond a "pure" cognitive approach. Just as we do not have a full understanding of intellectual functioning without affect, neither will we understand reading fully without affect.

Reading Models

There are a few models of reading that do at least include affect (e.g., Holmes, 1953, 1960; Ruddell, 1976; Ruddell & Speaker, 1985; Singer, 1976). And although these few models do not go much beyond acknowledging affect, they do offer some insight as to the possible way affect is involved in reading. For example, Holmes (1960) hypothesized that attitudes, beliefs, and values are "mobilizers" which determine whether a reader will undertake and persevere with the

task at hand. Similarly, Ruddell's (1976) model of reading proposed that affective mobilizers influence reading at all levels from surface structure through deep structure. Ruddell and Speaker (1985) included the reader's *affective state* as one of several components which influence text processing and information activation; they explain that it is "the reader's interests, attitudes, and values which determine goals and objectives for the reading of a passage" (1985, p. 756).

Although these examples call attention to the importance of affective variables in reading behavior, they come from models which have not elaborated how affect works in reading. However, Mathewson (1985) has set out a model of reading which tries to explicate the role of affect.

Mathewson's Model

Mathewson (1985) proposes four affective variables, all of which influence reading. These variables are *attitude, motivation, affect,* and *physical feelings*. Although all four are affective in nature, Mathewson uses the term *affect* in his model to refer to mood, sentiment, and emotions. He uses *attitude toward reading* to include attitude toward the content and format of what is to be read as well as attitude toward reading in general and toward the source of reading materials (e.g., a peer group member vs. a teacher, a magazine vs. a textbook). *Motivational processes* relevant to reading include curiosity as well as such needs as competence, achievement, esteem, and self-actualization. *Physical feelings* refers to sensations of pleasure and pain which can influence whether a reader continues reading; examples include feelings arising from eye strain or sitting too long in one position.

Mathewson distinguishes among these four affective variables because, although they are all affective and continually interact, each has unique qualities of its own. For example, Mathewson notes that "if children are to read, they will need not only a favorable attitude toward reading, but also an appropriate motivation" (1985, p. 842); in other words, a favorable attitude needs to be accompanied by a "separate, energizing process" (p. 842). Other affective concepts, such as value and interest, are not included as separate processes because Mathewson sees them as interactions of the four basic processes.

Mathewson hypothesizes that the affective processes (attitude, motivation, affect, and physical feelings) influence the reading process. He divides the reading process into several categories in order to clarify the extensive influence of affective variables. Specifically, affect influences *attention* and *comprehension*. In addition, *physical orientation and activity* (such as physical stance, eye movement, and tension) are included since these may influence a reader's feelings toward reading. Furthermore, Mathewson argues that affect influences the reading processes of *recall, reflection,* and *application* (which he defines as remembering information, thinking about it, and acting on it, respectively).

Thus, affective variables influence all aspects of reading. In addition, the reading process feeds back to the affective components. For example, "During the process of reading, negative affect may accumulate, directly depressing attention and comprehension processes. Following reading, negative attitudes or affect could suppress recall, reflection, and application" (p. 848). Similarly, positive affect can

facilitate those same processes, making a student more likely to undertake or persevere with a reading task.

In short, affective variables influence comprehension and are, in turn, influenced by the reading process. Consequently, affective variables are not just a factor to consider in comprehension but an integral part of the reading process—involved before, during, and after reading.

THE VALUE OF INCLUDING AFFECT IN MODELS OF READING

Why should teachers concern themselves with the role of affective variables in cognitive research and models of reading? Isn't the importance of affective variables in reading obvious to all? Unfortunately other concerns have taken priority so that affect has been neglected in explanations of the reading process; these explanations, in turn, influence what we believe about appropriate instruction. In addition, the current educational climate still has remnants of behaviorism and is influenced by cognitive process research which neglects affect and influences the climate in which teachers make decisions and implement instruction. With pressure from all sides to improve students' performance, it is hard not to succumb to a pure cognitive approach, or even to a drill-and-practice approach in which affective issues are frills.

As Pinnell (1989) has established, conflicts between individual beliefs and school system expectations are common: even the best teachers are often overwhelmed by the school environment. Although teachers may believe that affective variables are important, the larger context in which they work can result in a non-supportive environment which causes them to question these beliefs (Dreher & Singer, 1989; Duffy, Roehler, & Putman, 1987). Thus, without an explicit model of the importance of affect in reading, it is easy to make instructional judgments in which we implicitly view affective concerns as less than integral to reading.

But concerns with both illiteracy and aliteracy make it clear that we must give high priority to affect in reading. We need to reverse the finding that students' reading habits and attitudes toward reading become increasingly negative as they progress through school (Mikulecky, 1987).

The value of a model such as Mathewson's is that it is helpful to teachers in maintaining a focus on affect in the teaching of reading; it makes explicit the way affective variables influence the reading process. An explicit description of the role of affect in reading helps to provide a sound framework for justifying decisions and helps to demonstrate that affective issues are central to reading instruction, and not an optional frill.

REFERENCES

Athey, I. (1985). Reading research in the affective domain. In H. Singer and R. B. Ruddell (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading*, (3rd ed.) (pp. 527-557). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Dreher, M. J., & Singer, H. (1986). *Affective processes involved in reading comprehension*. Paper presented at the Eleventh World Congress on Reading. London: England.

Dreher, M. J., & Singer, H. (1989). The teacher's role in students' success. *The Reading Teacher, 42*, 612-617.

Duffy, G. G., Roehler, L. R., & Putman, J. (1987). Putting the teacher in control: Basal reading textbook and instructional decision-making. *The Elementary School Journal, 87*, 357-366.

Holmes, J. A. (1953). *The substrata-factor theory of reading*. Berkeley: California Book Company.

Holmes, J. A. (1960). The substrata-factor theory of reading: Some experimental evidence (pp. 115-121). In J. Figurel (Ed.), *New frontiers in reading*. Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Conference of the International Reading Association. New York: Scholastic.

Johnston, P. (1985). Understanding reading disability: A case study approach. *Harvard Educational Review, 55*(2), 153-177.

Mathewson, G. (1976). The function of attitude in the reading process. In H. Singer and R. B. Ruddell (Eds.). *Theoretical models and processes of reading* (pp. 655-677). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Mathewson, G. (1985). Toward a comprehensive model of affect in the reading process. In H. Singer and R. B. Ruddell (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading*, (3rd ed.) (pp. 841-856). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Mikulecky, L. J. (1987). Conquering aliteracy by increasing student motivation to read. *Reading Today, 4*, 14.

Norman, D. A. (1980). Twelve issues for cognitive science. *Cognitive Science, 2*, 1-32.

Pinnell, G. S. (1989). Using research to create a supportive literacy climate. In G. S. Pinnell and M. L. Matlin (Eds.), *Teachers and research: Language learning in the classroom* (pp. 99-117). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Ruddell, R. B. (1976). Language acquisition and the reading process. In H. Singer and R. B. Ruddell (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading*, (2nd ed.) (pp. 22-38). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Ruddell, R. B., & Speaker, R. (1985). The interactive reading process: A model. In H. Singer and R. B. Ruddell (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading*, (3rd ed.) (pp. 751-793). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Singer, H. (1976). Substrata-factor patterns accompanying development in power of reading, elementary through college level. In H. Singer and R. B. Ruddell (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading*, (2nd ed.) (pp. 619-633). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

LITERACY: ISSUES AND PRACTICES, Volume 7, 1990

Pursuing the "Wisdom of Practice" in Preservice and Inservice Reading Teacher Instruction: An Electronic Communication Approach

Mark G. Gillingham
Washington State University
Vancouver, Washington

Reading teachers, in fact all teachers, must amass knowledge of several types in order to be effective. According to Shulman (1987), teachers must have knowledge of reading content, pedagogy, curriculum, contexts, and educational ends. This knowledge is derived from four major sources:

> "(1) scholarship in content disciplines, (2) the materials and settings of the institutionalized educational process (for example, curricula, textbooks, school organizations and finance, and the structure of the teaching profession), (3) research on schooling, social organizations, human learning, teaching and development, and the other social and cultural phenomena that affect what teachers can do, and (4) the wisdom of practice itself" (p. 8).

Shulman suggests that the "wisdom of practice" source may be the most difficult to pursue because teaching has no *audience* to speak to or *notation* to record a history of practice.

It is important for teachers to develop a culture of learning in which to share teaching strategies. Children learn about 13 words per day for 16 years in the context of ordinary communication. By contrast, teaching dictionary vocabulary is "almost useless in practice" (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989). Just as children learn vocabulary best in the context of ordinary communication, teachers learn their craft best in the context of their milieu: classroom, special room, or laboratory. But, whereas children have many opportunities for ordinary communication to build their vocabularies, teachers are more isolated in their own milieu or have only ritualized and *not ordinary* meetings, classes, and conferences in which to build their understanding of teaching.

Equally important as an audience to which to speak the wisdom of practice is a notation in which to record that wisdom for the teaching culture. A notation will help teachers reflect on practice, assess practice, and pass the wisdom of practice on to others.

This paper outlines a way to create a culture of learning that offers both an

audience and a notation for the wisdom of practice to preservice, induction-year, and inservice teachers through electronic communication. During the following discussion, an electronic communication network is assumed to be in place. General features of the network are: (a) connection to a school of education, its faculty, supervisory personnel, and students; (b) connection to school systems, their faculty, administration, and student teachers; and (c) connection to other networks of this kind and general broadband networks (e.g., BITNET). These features would allow, for example, a preservice teacher to mail an instantaneous note to a faculty member; an inservice teacher to request an article from a library; an interactive online meeting of several induction-year teachers from several locations; or a class of sixth-grade students to send their water conservation plans to peer students in the Soviet Union. The literature describes these and other uses for electronic communication (see Bull, Harris, Lloyd, & Short, 1989; Dreher, 1984).

FINDING AN AUDIENCE TO EXPLORE THE TEACHING OF READING

A teacher's audience changes according to one's stage in the induction process (i.e., preservice, induction-year, or inservice). In addition, one's audience at any one of the induction stages can be that of *peer* (a member of the same group) or *mentor* (a professor, supervisor, coach, etc.). See Table 1. The peer audience that one has for reflecting on concepts and processes of teaching are limited by the induction stage (columns of Table 1). Students are lucky because they see their peers in the context of learning in classrooms and sometimes in school practicums. Induction-year teachers may be teamed with a teacher-mentor. Unfortunately even when a mentor is available, s/he usually has little free time, may have several teachers to mentor, and may not even be a reading teacher or specialist. Teachers are at the greatest disadvantage for a peer audience. Usually, teachers only see other teachers during inservice training or in the lounge where the "teacher talk" is hardly ever about improvement of pedagogy. Reading specialists and other building specialists fare even more poorly because they have to go outside the building to find a peer audience.

As with the peer audience, the mentor audience changes from preservice to inservice teacher. Preservice teachers have professors and practicum teachers as models; professors usually can offer more sustained interaction. Induction-year teachers may have a teacher-mentor or (rarely) a continued connection with a school of education. The teacher has the infrequent inservice training by peers and external topic experts.

The problem with gaining the wisdom of practice in this manner is that the

Table 1
Access to Peers and Mentors During Preservice, Induction-Year, and Inservice Teaching.

	Preservice	**Induction-year**	**Inservice**
Peers	Students	Teachers	Teachers
Mentors	Professors	Mentor-Teachers	Trainers, Dept. Heads

wisdom becomes compartmentalized. Rather than flowing across the boundaries of professors, students, and teachers, the conventional method isolates knowledge by the level of teacher induction (preservice, induction-year, and inservice).

Teachers' Isolation Deprives Them of Social Monitors and Reflection

There are extraordinary barriers to communication among those involved in all levels of education: Groups representing students in preservice programs, teachers in their sensitive induction year, and experienced teachers have little communication among or within groups (Calfee, 1984; Cuban, 1982).

Preservice teachers are isolated by their campus settings. They have access to professors on a regular basis, but not to classroom teachers. The theory and practical strategies that are taught are not usually tried out. If they are, they are not usually observed by the professor who could give appropriate feedback. Even if a classroom teacher observes a student, there is usually no time to give detailed feedback nor is there a means of contacting the student out of the classroom.

Induction year students are isolated by the unfamiliarity with a new teaching situation, new children, new rooms, new peers, and new administrators. In addition, they have all of the isolating factors that experienced teachers endure: a single workroom for teaching and preparing to teach, limited telephone privileges, and little access to peers to talk about work (i.e., teaching) strategies.

Networks allow teachers to reach out to others (peers and mentors) and reduce isolation. Computer networks allow greater communication possibilities than is typical in educational settings. Networks facilitate information flow. For instance, networks can be a conduit for administrative information, for curriculum information, an impetus to reflect, and a vehicle for asking questions of peers, administrators, and supervisors.

Teachers feel isolated in their classrooms and do not see other teachers in the context of teaching (e.g., in the classroom). The ability to write to a teacher in one's building or at another site, to an administrator, a professor, or to a regional or state education agency helps to open the culture of teaching to a wider group. In an attempt to reach out even further, teachers in Virginia and their students are communicating with "Thomas Jefferson," a knowledgeable staff member at Monticello (Bull, et al., 1989).

Methods of Using the Audience to Acquire the Wisdom of Reading Instruction

It is apparent that teaching is even more complex than a diagnosis and prescription model might suggest. Teachers at all induction levels must acquire varied knowledge (e.g., declarative, procedural, and metacognitive) and learn to weave that knowledge together to teach particular individuals about particular topics in real time. The added constraints of multiple individuals, multiple topics, and time constraints make teaching closer to improvisation than to playing from a script or score (Kagan, 1988).

Because of the complexity of teaching, one must see many examples of it in order learn how it is done. An improvisational jazz performer would not learn his or her art only by practicing routines and reading scores. The performer would listen to music, watch performers, and play with others over a period of months and

years. Likewise, a novice teacher who has practiced a few teaching strategies and read a few case studies is not ready to perform the art of teaching. However, the novice teacher, unlike the jazz musician, does not have the opportunity to listen to and watch teachers or to "perform" with skilled teachers.

Electronic communication can help to provide a peer and mentor audience. Once an audience has been established, teachers can see, hear, and perform with this audience.

Reflection as a means to make use of an audience. Reflection is a major source of improving one's teaching performance. Reflection allows one to pause in routines and determine the extent to which an activity had a theoretical basis and was effective (Zeichner & Liston, 1987). Reflection is often private (one reflects on one's own work); however, reflection is often best when it is semi-private or public. Preservice teachers who keep journals of their practicum experiences and share them with a professor or peers are rewarded with new reading knowledge, reading strategies, and important support for successes and failures.

Unfortunately, teachers seldom have the luxury to reflect on common activities because they cannot be released to observe and because they don't have time to meet for reflection. This is just as true of preservice as inservice teachers and is especially troublesome for a building or district specialist.

Many preservice teachers are required to write in journals, but writing in journals can also be useful during the induction year and after. The problem is that there is no one to read and react to the journal. One solution is to create *electronic journals* that might be shared with one another or a small group. The pool of mentors increases when the journal can be electronically transported to a school of education, a regional education agency, another building in the district, or even down the hall.

Other methods of reducing isolation. Teachers in a variety of regions have instituted intra- and international electronic communication with one another. The purpose of some of these plans has ostensibly been to place students in problem-solving situations. In gaining information (e.g., about climate, crops, social problems, and economic problems) from a variety of regions or nations, students learn new cultural as well as problem solving knowledge. Teachers also learn in these situations because they are involved in planning and coordinating the events. As a bonus to students, they have been placed in situations where they are highly motivated to communicate accurately (write and read) with other problem solvers.

Other methods of reducing teacher isolation by electronic communication are as varied as one's imagination. Recently, my colleagues in education and I have invoked a policy of reading a research article for discussion at each online meeting. Another example is an electronic bulletin board system (BBS) in Prince George's County, MD that has forums for teachers to share ideas. The ideas range from lesson plans and software ideas to movie reviews. The same BBS has forums for students ranging from poetry to jokes.

NOTATING THE PRACTICE OF TEACHING READING

One way to share the wisdom of practice is to write it. What notation or group of symbols should be used to share this wisdom? The following section describes methods of sharing the wisdom of reading practice.

Plans as the Notation of Strategies

Strategies are basic to what teachers do when they plan and teach. When a teacher writes a plan, s/he is notating strategies. Strategy descriptions can become a common symbol system for teachers because many referents are common for teachers: students, classroom, basic teaching tools, etc. (See Table 2.) What teachers really do in classrooms, to a great extent, is perform strategies. Strategies are created from theory, practice, and many other sources. They grow in number and change in quality with experience. The number and complexity of expert teachers' strategies is astounding. For example, in a 4.5 min. lesson recorded by Leinhardt and Greeno (1986), the teacher implemented 9 actions (e.g., call on a student), 6 functions (i.e., implement a content delivery strategy), and balanced 6 simultaneous constraints (keep pace, complete task, involve different students, notice stragglers, keep interest, and do not embarrass students).

Teachers could benefit by talking to each other about their teaching strategies. Preservice and induction-year teachers would benefit from the reflection of experienced teachers. Experienced teachers would benefit from novice teachers because they may be closer to new research from "campus." Novice teachers can remind experienced teachers of discarded ineffective strategies or substrategies that are no longer used and have been forgotten. Without a reminder of these discarded strategies, experienced teachers would not be able to comment to novices about them. Experienced peers would benefit because they are communicating about the process of what they do all day—teach.

In a culture of teachers, a teacher would feel the pride of accomplishment at sharing his or her strategy with another. Similarly, teachers would feel more value if they could converse with a peer after having only students to interact with all day. Even playful banter online is useful and can lead to intense problem solving in the future because human ties have been made.

Units as the Notation of Long-Range Plans

Where strategies are the atoms of plans, units are molecular; they cover more time and concepts, but at a coarser level. Planning for units requires more knowledge of curriculum than planning for a lesson. For a single lesson, one must coordinate pace, elapsed time, student interruptions, and other factors of real-time teaching. Longer-range planning requires different knowledge and strategies. By sharing units and the knowledge and strategies contained in them, teachers add to the notated wisdom of practice that all teachers are struggling to learn.

Table 2
Means of Notating Teaching Practice

Notation	
Plans	Strategies for what works
Units:	Long range plans
Action Research:	Problem solving
Literature Interpretation:	Knowledge acquisition

Action Research as the Notation of Problem Solving

Once teachers begin communicating with peers and mentors, problem solving can take more formal means. Action research is one means to formalize problem solving. Although there is no one method of action research, generally a teacher has a strategy s/he wishes to apply and test its effect. The strategy is applied, effects are observed, and results are reported (at least to oneself).

Action research allows teachers to solve important, yet idiosyncratic, problems. It only needs to be of interest to the teacher or group of teachers involved. Innovations can be tried and tested by teachers, the ones who have the most to gain. Once the action has been taken and the results calculated, the teacher can share via the network with all who are interested. This creates a fairly perfect scientific method: a problem is identified, a strategy is produced to deal with the problem, the strategy is implemented, results are calculated, and disseminated. The network allows collaboration, tapping of experts, and dissemination.

Collaborative action research brings peers and mentors together to solve meaningful problems in their curriculum, pedagogy, or setting. Collaboration can foster new bonds within and across disciplines and include peers and mentors.

Interpreting the Notation of Formal Research

Once teachers have built a culture of learning, they are more likely to be interested in formal research. The process of action research attunes a teacher to other topics of study and to research in general. One who has performed research has an appreciation for other research efforts and is more interested in their results.

The communication network can help them to locate appropriate articles through online reference systems (e.g., ERIC). Reference systems can be purchased on CD-ROM for local use, rented from online sources (e.g., DIALOG), or transported on disk or paper from a library's reference system.

The advantages of interpreting research literature online include the convenience of setting your own time, having an extended time to reflect and review before responding, and having days to reflect on particularly interesting or obtuse points. Those who are more reticent are at a particular advantage in an online meeting that lasts a week rather than a face-to-face meeting that lasts an hour.

Interest in research and growing expertise positively affects teaching and promotes more communication, action research, and collaboration.

COMMUNICATION AMONG SCHOOLS

An electronic broadband network can be the backbone of a new kind of preservice, induction-year, and inservice teacher education program. The network can provide the communication among the important parts of the professional education experience. Among these important parts are access to the mundane (e.g., access to school records and curricula), the mentor (e.g., access to professors and libraries), the practical (e.g., access to experienced teachers), and each other (e.g. to offer peer support and collaboration).

Imagine a school of education that is in constant communication with its preservice teachers during a yearlong practicum experience. The practicum and cooperating teachers and students have constant access to professors. Induction year

teachers are linked to their peers, former education school personnel, and experienced teachers. Finally, imagine that all teachers could find friends and colleagues on their desktop workstation connected to a network.

The components of the network could vary from rather simple electronic bulletin boards to very elaborate centralized information services. I recommend an intermediated solution, a distributed network that allows every user to share (i.e., hold accountable) some of the work. The dual advantages of a distributed network are that a network culture can grow at each network site, even though each site is connected to the larger culture and that costs are lower than centralized nets.

One communication network in Virginia called Teacher-LINK has enhanced their teacher internship program, expanded teacher-to-teacher communication, and increased the quality of ideas flowing into and between schools (Bull, et al., 1989). As computers become commonplace on teachers' desks and as local and broadband networks increase and improve, education networks will be increasingly possible. Use of these networks depends solely on the individual teachers who wish to use the networks to expand their culture of teaching. Those teachers who choose to join the culture will be rewarded with a growing audience and notation with which to share the wisdom of practice.

REFERENCES

Brown, J. S., Collins, A., & Duguid, P. (1989). Situated cognition and the culture of learning. *Educational Research, 18*(1), 32-42.

Bull, G., Harris, J., Lloyd, J., & Short, J. (1989). The electronic academical village. *Journal of Teacher Education, 40*(4), 27-32.

Calfee, R. (1984). *Applying cognitive psychology to educational practice: The mind of the reading teacher*. Unpublished manuscript, Stanford University.

Cuban, L. (1982). Persistent instruction: The high school classroom, 1900-1980. *Phi Delta Kappan, 64*, 113-118.

Dreher, H. V. (1984, August). Electronic mail: An exemplar of computer use in education. *Educational Technology*, 36-38.

Kagan, D. M. (1988). Teaching as clinical problem solving: A critical examination of the analogy and its implications. *Review of Educational Research, 58*, 482-505.

Leinhardt, G., & Greeno, J. G. (1986). The cognitive skill of teaching. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 78*, 75-95.

Shulman, L. S. (1987). Knowledge and teaching: Foundations of the new reform. *Harvard Educational Review, 57*, 1-22.

Zeichner, K. M., & Liston, D. P. (1987). Teaching student teachers to reflect. *Harvard Educational Review, 57*, 23-48.

LITERACY: ISSUES AND PRACTICES, Volume 7, 1990

Passage Dependency and Prior Knowledge: Implications for the Assessment of Reading Comprehension

Rose Marie Codling
University of Maryland

Two issues, passage dependency and prior knowledge, are important considerations in the assessment of reading comprehension. If a test item is designed to measure comprehension of a passage, the item must be passage dependent to ensure that a correct response does not solely reflect prior knowledge. On the other hand, prior knowledge is an integral part of the process of reading, and comprehension cannot occur without some sort of framework around which the author's ideas can be understood. How can both passage dependency and prior knowledge be important when they seem to be contradictory notions?

According to Tuinman (1971), a test item is "reading dependent if the probability of the item being answered correctly by someone who has not read the passage to which the item pertains does not exceed chance expectation" (p. 289). Conversely, passage independent items are those that are easily answered without reading an accompanying passage. Another definition of passage dependency suggests that it is the *degree* "to which items can be answered without reading the accompanying paragraph" (Allington, Chodos, Domaracki, & Truex, 1977, p. 369). This distinction is an important one. Questions may be passage dependent when used with one group but not with another, or at one time but not at another.

Our perception of the role of prior knowledge has changed dramatically over the past twenty years. In 1969, Weaver, Bickley and Ford stated that "a reading passage allows the author of the passage to communicate with the reader, and this communication is the reading process. The reading passage, then, should control the reader's behavior" (p. 11). Reading today is seen as an infinitely more complex process. A reader's background knowledge is a critical factor in the process (Anderson, Reynolds, Schallert, & Goetz, 1977). In fact, it is thought that prior knowledge not only influences the interpretation of text (Anderson, Spiro, & Anderson, 1977; Reynolds, Taylor, Steffensen, Shirey, & Anderson, 1981) but that comprehension depends upon it (Adams & Collins, 1977). That is to say, if the reader lacks the necessary prior knowledge it is not possible for comprehension to occur.

An individual's background knowledge may determine whether or not a test item is passage dependent. The difficulty in developing passage dependent items becomes evident when one stops to consider the differences in each individual's background of experience. Test items that are thought to be passage dependent may

turn out to be otherwise in particular situations because of these differences in readers' background knowledge. The implication is that correct responses to test items should depend on text content. At the same time readers should be allowed and encouraged to use their existing knowledge structures to make sense of what they read. Is it possible to achieve both objectives in reading comprehension assessment?

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Passage dependency first came to light during the early sixties. It was discovered that many students were able to answer questions correctly on comprehension tests without reading an accompanying paragraph. Several studies subsequently investigated the question of passage dependency (Duffelmeyer, 1980; Preston, 1964; Pyrczak, 1976; Weaver et al., 1969). Questions were given to students who had not read the corresponding passage. In each instance, it was found that the number of questions answered correctly by students who had not read the passage was higher than the number expected to be answered correctly by chance.

Pyrczak (1972) compared the number of subjects scoring correctly to the number of subjects who would be expected to get an item correct on the basis of chance alone. According to Pryczak, an index based upon this comparison would be helpful to those who construct comprehension questions.

Tuinman (1973-74) studied elementary grade children taking five popular standardized tests. He found that passage independent questions were very frequent and that different tests vary in degree of passage dependency. Like Pyrczak, Tuinman proposed an index for use by test authors in constructing questions. Tuinman's index also takes into account the relationship between the proportion of correct responses when the passage was read and when it was not read.

Allington, Chodos, Domaracki, and Truex (1977) reviewed four reading tests to determine to what extent they contained passage dependent questions. The subjects' ability to answer correctly without reading the accompanying passage again exceeded chance expectations. Within each test there was much inconsistency in passage dependency.

This body of research served a very worthwhile purpose. Test consumers were made aware of the passage dependency issue and began to look more critically at what comprehension tests actually measure.

More recently, no studies have specifically addressed passage dependency. It seems that during the mid-seventies the fervor about passage dependency has diminished, and research on prior knowledge has emerged. The belief that prior knowledge is intricately involved in comprehension became more widespread and was substantiated by research conducted in the late seventies and early eighties (Anderson, Reynolds, Schallert, & Goetz, 1977; Anderson, Spiro, & Anderson, 1977; Johnston, 1984; Reynolds et al., 1981).

Several researchers have looked at assessment in relation to minority students (De Avila & Havassy, 1974; Newland, 1973; Oakland, 1973; Steffensen, Joag-Dev, & Anderson, 1979). The general focus of this research has been on how the culture and experiences of these individuals vary and how their background affects their success on traditional measures of comprehension. Findings indicate that cul-

tural knowledge is not tapped by traditional instruments and that a lack of prior knowledge means that these minority individuals do not perform as well as their counterparts on comprehension tests. These studies have relevance to the present discussion because they highlight particularly well the difficulty in developing test items that are not influenced by prior knowledge.

PASSAGE DEPENDENCY VS. PRIOR KNOWLEDGE: DO WE HAVE TO MAKE A CHOICE?

Passage dependency is obviously very difficult to achieve for all individuals on group tests. Efforts have been made, however, to improve the quality of standardized tests in recent years.

Anderson (1972) raised serious concerns about the types of questions commonly found on comprehension tests. According to Anderson, questions that are verbatim statements of the text do not measure comprehension and we need to develop questions that paraphrase what has been presented in the text to ensure that it has been comprehended. Pearson and Johnson (1978), in keeping with the view that prior knowledge plays a role in comprehension, have developed a system for classifying questions. Questions are viewed in terms of the source of the information utilized by the student in responding. "Textually-explicit" comprehension occurs when the information is directly stated in the text. "Textually-implicit" comprehension is also text–based but requires the reader to draw some inferences. When the reader makes inferences based on prior knowledge to answer a question, the term "scriptally-implicit" is used. Other classification systems have been developed in an effort to present a wider variety of question types, thereby checking different facets of comprehension (Lucas and McConkie, 1980).

These strides toward improving standardized tests have resulted in better, more carefully constructed tests. They attempt to address passage dependency while taking prior knowledge into account. However, they still do not guarantee that an individual has not answered questions based on prior knowledge alone. This presents a problem but it does not mean that passage independence should be ignored or that we should abandon the use of standardized testing formats. Passage dependency should always be a consideration for test users who should take active steps to minimize the problems associated with it. Prior knowledge is equally important and should receive careful attention also. We need not choose between the two issues.

IMPLICATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The paradox between passage dependency and the influence of prior knowledge has some important implications for reading comprehension assessment, which must be considered in the construction, administration and interpretation of reading comprehension assessment instruments.

Standardized Tests

Reading authorities have recommended various changes in the construction of standardized tests. Using more variety in testing format (Preston, 1964) is a good idea under any circumstances. Attempting to eliminate prior knowledge from com-

prehension assessment, as suggested by Duffelmeyer, undermines the reading process. Pyrczak's (1976) suggestion to base questions on little known information contained in a passage might reduce passage independency but could serve to focus on noncentral content. Previewing test items and discarding items receiving correct responses that exceed chance levels (Pyrczak, 1976) may help to eliminate some passage independent items. Because of the constructive nature of the reading process, however, this will not always alleviate the problem. Readers will always bring to the task a framework for understanding the text which will influence how it is perceived.

Those in a position to utilize results of traditional standardized tests should recognize two important factors: (a) Prior knowledge exerts a significant influence on reading comprehension, and items on standardized tests may be measuring prior knowledge and not comprehension; and (b) each individual's prior knowledge varies, resulting in important questions as to the interpretation of test results for individual students. An awareness of these limitations is crucial to the interpretation of test results.

Estimating Prior Knowledge

It has been suggested that an estimate of prior knowledge should be included in assessments of reading comprehension (Allington et al. 1977; Henk, 1987; Johnston, 1984). Because of the inescapable link between prior knowledge and reading comprehension, assessing a reader's background knowledge prior to reading will help to distinguish between students whose comprehension is good and those whose comprehension is poor but whose prior knowledge helps them to score well on tests. At this time, assessing prior knowledge may be the most workable solution to the problem since it appears that no amount of effort will successfully eliminate the effect of background knowledge from comprehension assessment.

Alternatives to Standardized Tests

Because of the limitations of standardized tests, we need to focus on alternative ways to assess reading comprehension. Some suggestions follow.

1. Process-oriented assessment. Recent research on the reading process and comprehension have opened the door to an emphasis on a process-oriented approach to assessment (Wittrock, 1987). Such an approach is designed to observe students as they reason their way through text. The purpose of process-oriented assessment is to determine the strategies utilized by the student and to place the teacher in a position to teach what is needed.

Flint-Ferguson and Youga (1987) offer some interesting alternatives to product-oriented assessment. Their suggestions focus on incorporating evaluation into everyday classroom activities. Some of these include a student-generated continuation of a story, retelling a story from a different point of view, and writing newspaper articles based on a recently read story. This process approach provides information to the teacher that is useful in making instructional decisions.

Naturalistic assessment (Moore, 1983) is also a 'process' approach. Assessment is viewed as an ongoing process interwoven with instruction. The goal is to assess a

student's needs while observing the types of instruction and particular situations that are conducive to success.

2. Informal Assessment. While recognizing the place of standardized and other formal tests, we should realize that informal classroom assessment is of great value. Stiggins (1985) puts the matter in excellent perspective. He discusses the prevalence of standardized tests and the media attention they receive, despite the fact that most instructional decisions are based primarily on informal teacher observation and assessment. He suggests that we need to shift the research emphasis away from standardized tests and more toward teacher-constructed assessments and teacher judgment while training teachers in assessment and its relationship to instruction.

Teacher preparation programs and inservice programs should focus on making teachers adept at informal assessment. The value of sound teacher judgment and keen observation cannot be overemphasized. Notes, anecdotal records and teacher-constructed instruments should be viewed as crucial elements in any student assessment.

SUMMARY

Passage dependency seems to have been overshadowed in recent years by the recognition of the importance of prior knowledge, but it remains a concern in comprehension assessment. Viewed from a schema-theoretic viewpoint, however, passage dependency takes on a new perspective. Whenever a reader interacts with text, the reader's prior knowledge will likely affect interpretation of that text. Passage dependency must be viewed in this light. We should expect and encourage the integration of new information with existing knowledge; this is what comprehension is all about. But if we are to use standardized test results, we must recognize the highly individual nature of prior knowledge and its impact on reading comprehension. Attempting to estimate prior knowledge and taking a more global view of comprehension assessment will help to place passage dependency and prior knowledge in proper perspective.

REFERENCES

Adams, M. J. & Collins, A. (1977). *A schema-theoretic view of reading*. (Technical Report No. 32). Urbana: University of Illinois, Center for the Study of Reading.

Allington, R. L., Chodos, L., Domaracki, J., & Truex, S. (1977). Passage dependency: Four diagnostic oral reading tests. *The Reading Teacher, 30*, 369-375.

Anderson, R. C. (1972). How to construct achievement tests to assess comprehension. *Review of Educational Research, 42*, 145-170.

Anderson, R. C., Reynolds, R. E., Schallert, D. L., & Goetz, E. T. (1977). Frameworks for comprehending discourse. *American Educational Research Journal, 14*, 367-81.

Anderson, R. C., Spiro, R. J., & Anderson, M. C. (1977). *Schemata as scaffolding for the representation of information in connected discourse*. (Technical Report No. 24). Urbana: University of Illinois, Center for the Study of Reading. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 136 236).

De Avila, E. A., & Havassy, B. (1974). The testing of minority children—A neo-Piagetian approach. *Today's Education, 63*(4), pp. 71-75.

Duffelmeyer, F. A. (1980). The passage independence of factual and inferential questions. *Journal of Reading, 24,* 131-134.

Flint-Ferguson, J., & Youga, J. (1987). Making evaluation a part of the learning process. *Journal of Reading, 31,* 140-145.

Henk, W. A. (1987). Reading assessments of the future: Toward a precision diagnosis. *The Reading Teacher, 40,* 860-866.

Johnston, P. (1983). *Reading comprehension assessment: A cognitive basis.* Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Johnston, P. (1984). Prior knowledge and reading comprehension test bias. *Reading Research Quarterly, 19,* 219-239.

Lucas, P. A., & McConkie, G. W. (1980). The definition of test items: A descriptive approach. *American Educational Research Journal, 17,* 133-140.

Moore, D. W. (1983). A case for naturalistic assessment of reading comprehension. *Language Arts, 60,* 957-969.

Newland, T. E. (1973). Assumptions underlying psychological testing. In B. N. Phillips (Ed.), *Assessing minority group children. A special issue of the journal of school psychology, 11,* 315-322.

Oakland, T. D. (1973). Assessing minority group children: Challenges for school psychologists. In B. N. Phillips (Ed.), *Assessing minority group children. A special issue of the journal of school psychology, 11,* 294-303.

Pearson, P. D., & Johnson, D. D. (1978). *Teaching reading comprehension.* New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Preston, R. C. (1964). Ability of students to identify correct responses before reading. *Journal of Educational Research, 58,* 181-183.

Pyrczak, F. (1972). Objective evaluation of the quality of multiple-choice test items designed to measure comprehension of reading passages. *Reading Research Quarterly, 8,* 62-71.

Pyrczak, F., & Axelrod, J. (1976). Determining the passage dependence of reading comprehension exercises: A call for replications. *Journal of Reading, 19,* 279-283.

Reynolds, R. E., Taylor, M. A., Steffensen, M. S., Shirey, L. L., & Anderson, R. C. (1981). *Cultural schemata and reading comprehension.* (Technical Report No. 201). Urbana: University of Illinois, Center for the Study of Reading.

Steffensen, M. S., Joag-Dev, C., & Anderson, R. C. (1979). A cross-cultural perspective on reading comprehension. *Reading Research Quarterly, 15,* 10-29.

Stiggins, R. J. (1985). Improving assessment where it means the most: In the classroom. *Educational Leadership, 43*(2), 69-76.

Tuinman, J. J. (1971). Asking reading dependent questions. *Journal of Reading, 14,* 289-292, 336.

Tuinman, J. J. (1973-74). Determining the passage dependency of comprehension questions in 5 major tests. *Reading Research Quarterly, 9,* 206-223.

Weaver, W. W., Bickley, A. C., & Ford, F. (1969). A cross-validation study of the relationship of reading test items to their relevant paragraphs. *Perceptual and Motor Skills, 29,* 11-14.

Wittrock, M. C. (1987). Process–oriented measures of comprehension. *The Reading Teacher, 40*(8), 734-737.

LITERACY: ISSUES AND PRACTICES, Volume 7, 1990

Adolescents' Exploration of Intimacy Through Reading and Writing

Sheldon Russell
Central State University
Edmond, Oklahoma

Strictly speaking, it is not the function of teachers to serve as counselors to their students. But to work with high school students is to deal with the unique personalities of adolescence in some fashion. To do less is to ignore the realities of their age, their struggle for identity, their search for intimacy. In fact, it is teachers who in many ways have the most direct access and perhaps the most influence over the emotions of their students. Teachers, by definition, deal with language, and it is through language that feelings are expressed. It is not uncommon for teachers to discover the most private and personal feelings of their students, by reading their papers, by noting the books they read, by encountering their imaginations. It is through language, reading and writing, that the struggle for identity can be most clearly revealed, and it is through the search for identity that adolescents must resolve intimacy questions. There is evidence to suggest that this is a common occurrence. "As of now, the few longitudinal studies available show that intimacy cannot be attained unless identity has first been achieved" (Sprinthall & Collins, 1988).

Intimacy is important in the sense of friendships, the ability to see others' viewpoints, the lack of exploitative behavior. "A broadened definition of intimacy includes adult friendships, leadership, and inspiration. A loving act in this form need not be overtly or covertly sexualized to fit the definition of intimacy" (Sprinthall & Collins). The selection of friends, the treatment of friends, and the acceptance by friends are of paramount importance to adolescents. Adolescents seek answers to these concerns which become questions of intimacy.

THE SEARCH FOR INTIMACY

The search for intimacy is very much a part of adolescent growth and is an appropriate concern for teachers. Adolescent girls in particular may use reading and writing as a way of experimenting with intimacy, a way less accessible to adolescent boys because of societal expectations. Girls' penchant for language is well-founded, at least early in their lives. It is known that their verbal facility is stronger than that of their male counterparts, and this facility continues to be of significance to them throughout their lives. Girls use language as an emotional outlet more readily than males. Girls learn early that language is an acceptable way to seek

emotional gratification, just as boys are brought up often to believe that language is a sign of weakness, that silence is strength, that action is better than words, and that what they do is more important than what they say. In fact, to say too much may render them vulnerable.

Evidence indicates that the development of intimacy and identity may differ between the sexes. Fitch and Adams (1983) found that males and females may arrive at intimacy in a different manner. Girls seem to be more consistently involved in interpersonal matters. Douvan & Adelson (1966) state, "What we do know, what the interview data make quite clear, is that boys in early adolescence are less sophisticated about friendship and less eager for intimacy than girls of the same age." Josselson (1973) felt that men measure their identity more objectively, whereas women are more interested in interpersonal competence, or friendships for friendships' sake. The need to communicate—to communicate at the interpersonal level—seems to be crucial to identity formation for adolescent girls. What is necessary, at some point and in some fashion, is the expression of intimacy through words. This seems to be particularly true of girls, perhaps because it is permissible in the culture. Josselson feels "that female identity is different in quality from male identity. Where identity in men is metaphorically a straight line that may twist and turn but moves ever forward, identity in women is a series of concentric circles." Still, one must at least consider the possibility that the same need is simply suppressed in the adolescent male because of social convention and that he need only be given the same opportunity.

Where can adolescents turn to safely examine their needs? Where do they explore? Where do they test their options? They can turn to each other and sometimes do, but there are obvious limitations here. Same-sex friendships cannot provide all of the necessary information for the development of intimacy. There is often a mutual lack of experience, a lack of accurate information, sometimes a lack of trust. There is always the possibility of betrayal of shared confidences, the danger of confiding too much in a friend.

READING AND WRITING AS RESOURCES FOR INTIMACY

Reading and writing play an important role in the development of intimacy for adolescents. They can explore the nuances of romantic love, and, through imagination, give reign to emotions denied them elsewhere. Here, as in no other way, they can explore relationships, ideal love, and commitment. They can hear the things they long to hear, be what they need to be, and they can do so in a private and secure world.

Publishing houses sell millions of romance novels. They have known all along that the search for intimacy is a compelling force, one that is not only compelling but often profitable, that here is a motivation worth noting. It isn't violence or sex that these books sell but intimacy, caring relationships, romantic love. What adolescents are searching for is emotion, intimacy, romance. They search for it where it is most available, and it is often most available in literature. Reading is a major source of intimacy, a way of filling in the gap left by a sometimes cynical and jaded society.

Literature abounds with stories of intimacy, the ability to put someone else before oneself. Adolescents need to explore and experiment with this concept, a con-

cept closely allied with cognitive development and formal thought. It is less a problem of what material to use as it is a problem of attitude and understanding. It is the teacher's attitude, acceptance, and awareness of the adolescent's struggle for identity that secures growth in thinking in perspective and achieving intimacy. Whether one chooses *Romeo and Juliet* or *Love Story* to field this exploration is a matter of taste, or perhaps a matter of the students' sophistication. Whether the teacher chooses to recognize the budding idealism of her students, or their newly acquired role-taking abilities, or their interest in heterosexual friendships, has more to do with communication skills than with reading skills, or with the literary merits of her selection.

It is the wise teacher who recognizes that adolescence is a time when egocentrism begins to fade and that students are stepping out of themselves for the first time. It is the wise teacher who selects literature that demonstrates how to deal with loneliness, how to establish and maintain friendships, and how to share rather than exploit. It is the wise teacher who selects materials that model friendships based on trust, loyalty, sensitivity. The importance of peer relationships in adolescence is well-documented. Adolescents have a profound need to know how to behave in these relationships. Teachers can take full advantage of such highly-charged motivation by providing literature ripe with appropriate examples.

If reading provides a way to think about intimacy, then writing must surely provide an even better way to express it. Who doesn't know at least one adolescent who pours over a diary, religiously entering secret and intimate thoughts? Who doesn't know at least one adolescent who is enthralled by the romantic language of poetry? Who doesn't know at least one adolescent whose pocket bulges with long and arduous notes, most of which will never be sent. It is not so much that they wish to be read as they wish to communicate. Writing permits expression of intimacy, a way of stepping back and examining inner-most thoughts. It's more important for adolescents to write something than it is to write something important. It's more important for adolescents to receive feedback, privacy, and opportunity than to receive formal assignments. A teacher who is aware and sensitive to the developmental changes of her students can provide feedback and opportunity.

THE POWER OF A TEACHER

Teachers often lament the verbal ineptness of adolescents, but it is the "real" world that sets the rules. It is the "real" world that rewards physical prowess, money, power. It is the "real" world that scoffs at emotion, imagination, intimacy, and it might be these very factors that have the greatest power to motivate future readers and writers.

Teachers have access to feelings and to material that can form feelings. These afford them special opportunities for the healthy development of the adolescent psyche. Teachers can be sensitive to an adolescent's need for intimacy and can understand that this is a crucial part of identity formation. Teachers can understand that because of cultural influences boys and girls may have different needs and different expectations about intimacy. Teachers can be aware that reading and writing are powerful tools in the development of emotional health and that skill instruction alone will not develop life-long readers. Sometimes the emotional response in reading is in itself sufficient purpose for reading.

The lesson for teachers of reading and writing must be that one of the great purposes of language is the exploration of intimacy, its subjectivity, its beauty, its symbolism, and that it is all right to use language that way. It is time for society to take a lesson, to see that a major part of living, intimacy, may have been suppressed by archaic cultural rules. Perhaps it is time for mothers and fathers to raise their sons with the poet's heart and to worry less about their financial futures. Perhaps it is time for teachers to recognize the need for the development of intimacy in their students and the power of reading and writing to do just that. Perhaps teachers can recognize that there is much to gain: an increase in verbal skills, a generation of readers and writers, and adults of both sexes with far healthier identities and intellects.

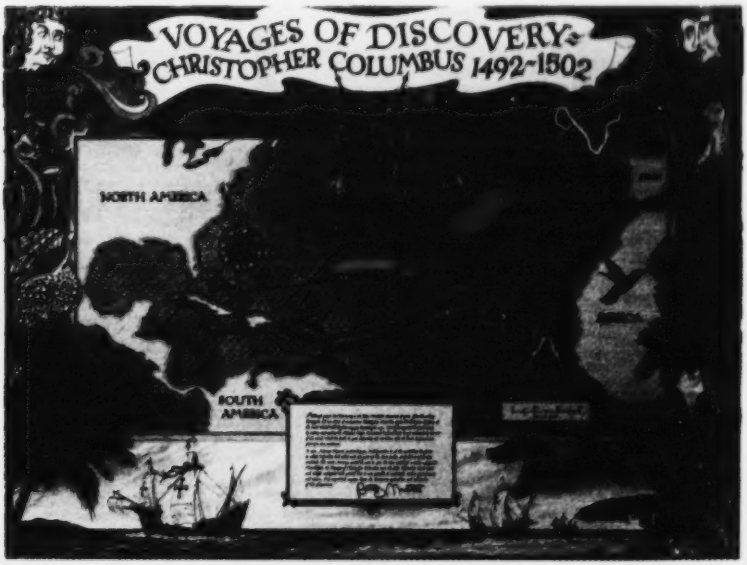
REFERENCES

Douvan, E. & Adelson, J. (1966). *The adolescent experience*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Fitch, S., & Adams, G. (1983). Ego identity and intimacy status: Replication and extension. *Developmental Psychology 19*(6), 839-845.

Josselson, R. (1973). Psychodynamic aspects of identity formation in college women. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence. 2*, 2-52.

Sprinthall, N. & Collins, W. (1988). *Adolescent psychology: A developmental view*. (2nd ed.) New York: Random House.



Available from Children's Book Council

LITERACY: ISSUES AND PRACTICES, Volume 7, 1990

Redefining the Role and Evaluation of the Reading Professional

Jane Brady Matanzo
The American University
Washington, DC

Recent instructional emphasis in reading reflects research and other knowledge garnered by authorities in actual classroom settings. This has included whole language emphases, instructional strategies including those leading to increased metacognition, and integration with literature, writing, listening, and speaking. To ensure that curricular changes take place, teachers responsible for reading instruction need training and ongoing support for behavioral change. One way to accomplish this support is to expand the role of reading professionals in given school system/district jurisdictions (Bean and Wilson, 1981; Cassidy and Seminoff, 1988). If such role expansion is to be effective and given due recognition, it seems natural that the role be clarified and evaluation procedures be established. Currently, reading professionals' efforts may not be acknowledged.

As a former instructional leader of reading and language arts instruction for a Maryland school district, I found the traditional means of evaluation using the classroom teacher evaluation form inadequate, although duty possibilities were listed on a memo circulated to reading professionals and administrators. It also did not reflect the majority of effort expended by most reading professionals. Before I attempted the development of a different and more appropriate evaluation instrument, it seemed prudent to survey other Maryland school jurisdictions to clarify their practices. This was reasonable as there were similarities in our needs since all jurisdictions were in the process of complying with state English-language arts guidelines. The remainder of this article presents survey findings of professional reading roles and evaluative criteria for school jurisdictions in Maryland. It also describes what one system did to effect a closer match between role and evaluative practice.

STATUS OF READING ROLES AND THEIR EVALUATION IN MARYLAND

The purpose of the survey was not to compare the 24 school jurisdictions in Maryland but to ascertain whether other colleagues were realizing a need for evaluative restructuring, and if any measures had been taken toward that end. A second purpose was to note the types and numbers of reading roles existing within the state.

In tabulating the surveys, it was found that of the 24 jurisdictions the following conditions existed. It must be noted that totals do not always equal 100 per cent as some jurisdictions reported multiple practices.

Table 1

	Number of Jurisdictions	Percentage
1. Jurisdictions without in-school reading support personnel (Central office support was provided)	6	25%
2. Title for reading professional		
a. Reading Teacher	8	33%
b. Reading Specialist	8	33%
c. Reading Support Teacher	2	8%
d. SHaRP Teacher	1	4%
e. Developmental Reading Teacher	1	4%
f. Other	1	4%
3. Reading professional role defined	15	63%
4. Evaluation form developed for reading professional	2	8%
5. Modified teacher evaluation form used	2	8%
6. Teacher evaluation form used	14	58%
7. No specified form	6	25%
8. Have reading professionals at elementary level	17	71%
9. Have reading professionals at middle school level	15	63%
10. Have reading professionals at high school level	9	38%

As can be seen, the reading professionals' roles and evaluations are quite varied. Three persons noted they were working toward a reading specialist role that would serve students both through direct instruction and teacher resource needs.

Fifteen jurisdictions (63%) offered a defined role for their reading professionals. Upon scrutiny, most stated roles expected on-site accomplishment *beyond* the items on classroom teacher evaluative forms which were used as is or as modified by 66% of the jurisdictions. The reading professionals were evaluated primarily on their small group teaching abilities and not given credit for development of school-

based reading programs and activities, work beyond the scope of reading, or rapport with classroom teachers and effectiveness as a resource. Neither were they evaluated as to their knowledge of the many aspects of the reading process including evaluation and placement, any workshops or demonstration presentations, their development of materials, and any other tasks based on an expanded role. Individual comments made by respondents applauded a need for separate forms and, in general, for an expanded reading professional role. As these were unprompted responses and mostly personal notes, no percentage of expression of this need has been made. However, it was voiced repeatedly that a classroom teacher's evaluation form does not satisfactorily encompass the evaluation of reading professionals as they try to meet given system jurisdiction and individual school needs and the reflection of state goals and objectives.

DEVELOPMENT OF EVALUATION TO MATCH READING ROLE

In the school system jurisdiction for which I was responsible, an evaluation form needed to be developed to accomplish two objectives:

1) Meet more accurately the position description of the reading professional; in this case, the reading professional carrying the title of reading specialist;
2) Serve as change agent for teachers and administrators in effecting curriculum growth.

The first step was to brainstorm position description possibilities from reading professionals, administrators, and teacher association representatives. An initial difficulty was to proceed beyond usual teacher-centered observations to tasks that might not be as easily assessed. It was important to adhere initially to brainstorming possibilities and not to be concerned with the implementation of such possibilities. From the pool of suggestions, five evaluative areas were developed: 1) teaching performance; 2) resource role; 3) evaluative skills; 4) professional characteristics; and 5) individual responsibilities. The evaluative scale showed five categories: superior, above average, satisfactory, unsatisfactory, and does not apply. Three lines for comments and supportive evidence followed each category. The evaluator and reading specialist signed each evaluation form if there was agreement. A photocopy of the evaluation was sent to the central office supervisor as one means of securing assistance for each school and to use as a resource for system-wide planning.

Each of the five categories was described as follows so as to characterize more specifically each evaluative area:

1. *Teaching Performance*
   Criteria included working effectively with remedial, developmental, and advanced students; planning and following through on that plan; incorporating reading, writing, speaking, and listening into small group planning; evaluating the group taught; using a variety of teaching strategies, and using positive reinforcement.

2. *Resource Role*
   Criteria included demonstrating lessons; suggesting and arranging for provision (if possible) of ideas and materials; distributing materials; informing staff of trends, materials, and strategies; encouraging language arts in content areas; acting as a resource for evaluating students' instructional levels; and conducting inservice sessions.
3. *Evaluative Skills*
   Criteria included monitoring total language arts programs, using placement and standardized test findings appropriately, and prescribing effective measures based on diagnosis.
4. *Professional Characteristics*
   Criteria included seeking professional growth, demonstrating communicative competence, being respected by school staff, adhering to policies and guidelines, and respecting group decisions.
5. *Institutional Responsibilities*
   Criteria included supporting district philosophy and objectives, demonstrating responsibility for school reports and records, participating in general school activities, recognizing various approaches for carrying out school program objectives, using established channels for positive change, and ordering and maintaining reading-language arts materials.

Reading specialists as a group outlined initial components to include in their own evaluation and then formed a subcommittee to refine the suggestions. The subcommittee also had administrative members who refined the items to include the evaluator's viewpoint. Glatthorn (1984) stresses that systems of evaluation which are effective should "include goal-setting techniques, an examination of products of student learning, and efficient use of checklist data." It was considered important that goal–setting choices be made in light of each reading specialist's assignment. The reading specialist and principal together set goals and special assignments (e.g. arrange book fair, coordinate volunteers) for the academic year. This was recorded on a form separate from the evaluation form with a copy returned to the reading supervisor by the end of the first month of school. The reading specialist and principal also noted which subcomponents within the five categories were to be evaluated in view of set goals. Each of the five areas needed to be included in the final evaluation but subcomponents focused upon within those areas could vary from school to school, reading specialist to reading specialist. For any subcomponents not selected for evaluation for that academic year, the column, *does not apply*, was checked.

Additional guidelines were developed to elaborate each area and its subcomponents. Training sessions were planned and presented both to those being evaluated and to those evaluating. Guidelines were also developed to show ways that the evaluation could be done over a period of time and through a series of informal observations. In other words, the formally accepted 30 minute observation of direct instruction was as inappropriate as the previously used teacher evaluation form.

Once in place, the evaluation component seemed to facilitate the type of support needed by each school–based reading professional implementing curricular

change. The newly designed form also seemed to foster the importance of efforts beyond teaching.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In summary, when change is to be effected that calls for the expansion of support roles, the evaluation component for that role also must be considered. If evaluation is used that is not commensurate with the role, that role may not be recognized, accepted, or valued by others. In addition, the expanded role may only be alive on paper and may not transfer to actual practice. When a change of evaluation is needed, it is important to include all "players" in its development, refinement, and implementation. Furthermore, choice in selecting the subcomponents in each category which best reflect each school's mission and goals, seems to encourage commitment to those selected components, and facilitates the school and teacher growth needed to realize curricular change.

As noted by the Maryland survey, the majority of reading professionals in that state are being evaluated on successful classroom teaching criteria. These criteria usually do not reflect or support the totality of the tasks expected to be accomplished by the reading professional. It is important to note that changed evaluation should not be an end in itself but should offer greater acknowledgment of effort and be a more accurate planning tool for meeting individual school and system-wide goals.

REFERENCES

Barr, R. (1986). What we know and what we need to learn about reading instruction. In Hoffman, J. V. (Ed.), *Effective teaching of reading; research and practice* (pp. 293-315). Newark, DE: The International Reading Association.

Bean, R. M. & Wilson, R. M. (1981). *Effecting change in school reading programs: The resource role*. Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Cassidy, J. & Seminoff, N. (1989). Improving the status and training of the reading professional. *Journal of Reading, 32*, 20-24.

Evans, R. (1989). The faculty in midcareer: Implications for school improvement. *Educational Leadership, 46*, 10-15.

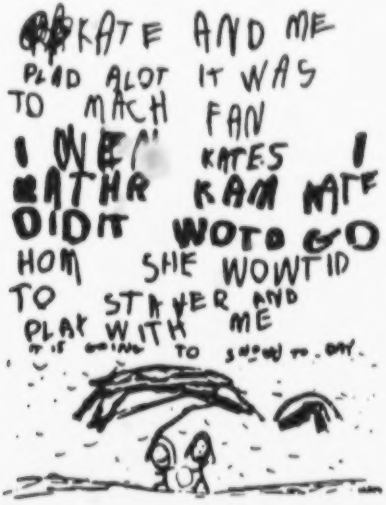
Glatthorn, A. A. (1984). *Differentiated supervision*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

LITERACY: ISSUES AND PRACTICES, Volume 7, 1990

Writing: Magic for A Five-Year-Old

Deborah Gordon Litt
Writing Consultant
Montgomery County Public Schools

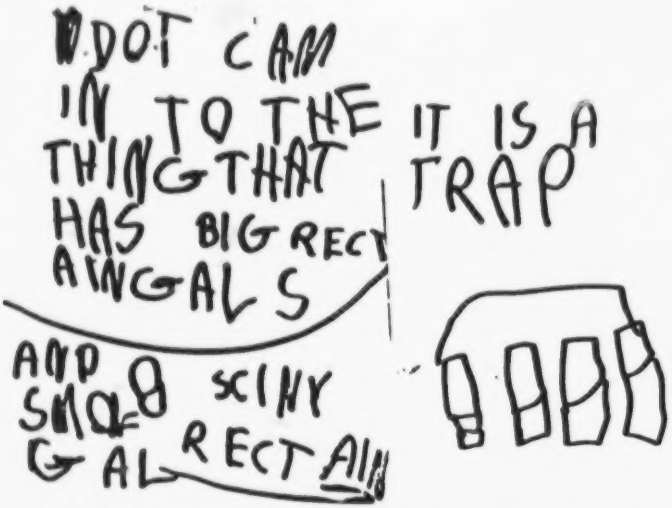
It was a dreary December afternoon. My daughter Rebecca was playing with her best friend, Kate. As often happens with five-year-olds, Kate, who had been cheerful and cooperative all afternoon, began to fuss and cry as soon as she saw her mother. After much pleading, a cup of apple juice and a small bag filled with crackers, Kate and her mother were finally out the door and down the stoop. When the noise faded, Rebecca settled down with her markers at the table and wrote this story.



Kate and me played a lot. It was too much fun. When Kate's mother came Kate didn't want to go home. She wanted to stay here and play with me. It is going to snow today.

She showed it to me as soon as she finished it. I was bursting with maternal pride. Here was my daughter, barely five years old, not only able to write—a minor miracle in itself—but comfortable enough with writing to use it as a tool to work through an upsetting event in her life. The ability to write confidently and competently is critical to success in school, and a tremendous asset in any job or

career, but writing is not a skill that comes easily to most people. Nevertheless, by the time Rebecca had written this story—December of her kindergarten year—she was thoroughly comfortable with writing. In her free time she was as likely to write as to draw or play house. In fact, it would be more accurate to say that she incorporated writing into her drawing, her building, her dramatic play. For weeks we shared the living room with a large, irregular block construction topped with this 11" × 18" sign.



Don't come into the thing that has big rectangles and 8 skinny small rectangles. It is a trap.

What a contrast to my own experience with writing! Until more recently than I would like to admit, writing for me was an ordeal accompanied by tears, tantrums and self-doubt. Since sustained writing was rarely assigned when I was in grade school, I was unaccustomed to writing and found it excruciatingly difficult to get started. Believing they were helping me learn, my teachers red-penciled every tiny error on my papers, yet rarely responded to the content. I was ashamed of every lapse, afraid of making mistakes, and more and more afraid of writing anything at all. On several occasions, I turned in blank sheets of paper! That I can still remember these events is evidence enough of how deep an impression they made. I was overjoyed with the thought that Rebecca might be spared the pain and humiliation I had associated with writing for so many of my school years.

Rebecca's early writing and my reaction to it were a turning point in my life. That universal parental desire to make a better life for one's children inspired me to learn about the art of writing and the teaching of writing to children so that Rebecca, and other children, would not have to repeat my childhood frustrations. In the years since Rebecca finished kindergarten, I have become an educational consultant; I work with children and teachers to develop Writing Workshops in

classrooms. What follows is the story of my introduction to the concept of the Writing Workshop.

INTRODUCTION

Like so many parents, I had a knot in my stomach and a lump in my throat the day Rebecca started kindergarten. Of course my feelings were partly due to the difficulty of separation, but I also feared we would be losing influence over her development once she began "real" school. My husband and I were particularly concerned that Rebecca might lose the wonderful creativity and spontaneity we had observed in her private play. We remembered school as a lot of fill-in-the-blanks, one correct answer, penmanship taking precedence over ideas, with little room for exploration, trial and error, or thinking of new ways to solve problems. Yet, as adults, the people we most admire are creative: the ones who can paint or sculpt; the ones who write with verve and originality; the ones who come up with fresh ways of approaching problems or who discover new problems to solve. And today there are word processors to take care of penmanship. We were afraid that if Rebecca got in the habit of only being concerned with getting the right answer, she would not live up to her intellectual and creative potential. Playing it safe to avoid error does not produce much original thinking. Fortunately, our fears were entirely unfounded.

Teachers in Rebecca's school, aided by Professor Lucy McCormick Calkins of Teachers College, Columbia University, a nationally known researcher and educator, taught children to write using techniques developed by Calkins and her colleagues. These researchers studied what children learn about writing—often quite different from what they were taught—and when they learn it, as well as how professional writers go about their craft. Calkins and others concluded that children could learn to write best if allowed to follow the same process skilled writers use. It turned out that the process of writing, when approached in this manner, encouraged many of the same abilities we were seeking in Rebecca's early schooling: creative thinking, self-expression, and a willingness to accept mistakes as an inevitable part of learning.

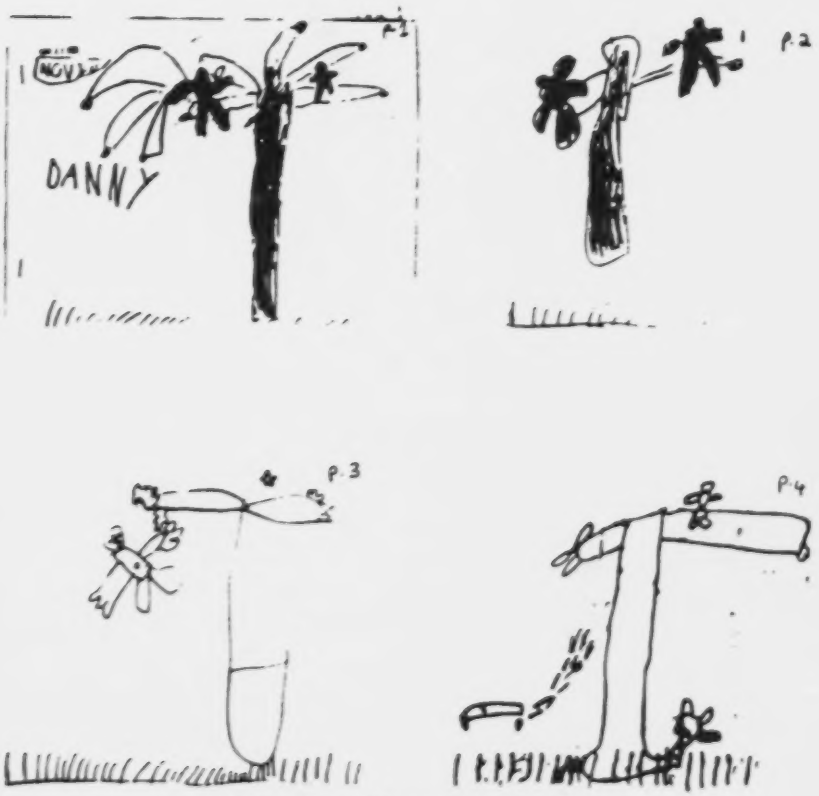
By the time Rebecca wrote the story about Kate's visit, I was beginning to understand a little about this approach just from watching Rebecca write at home, but I had many questions about how this procedure worked with a group of 26 five-year-olds. I gleaned as much information as I could from Rebecca, but the kinds of things she told me only whetted my appetite for more. " 'Writing Land' is a great place, you know. You should try writing, Mummy, you'd love it." "You know what we can do if we want?" Then, in a hushed, reverent tone: "Publish."

Publish? In kindergarten? "Writing Land?" I decided to visit the class to see what was really going on.

WRITING WORKSHOP

When I walked into Mrs. Seltzer's classroom, the children were busily writing and drawing in all areas of the room. Some were sitting at desks, but most of the children were comfortably sprawled on the floor. They were using fine-line

markers, pencils and crayons on paper of assorted shapes and sizes. Everywhere I looked there were hand-printed signs, children's art, and writing. There was quiet chatter and light laughter all around the room as children read their stories and showed drawings to each other. Most of the children were exchanging questions, advice, and markers with one another as they worked, but a few had sought out quiet corners where they would not be interrupted. They were writing about the things that really happened to them: a bird that came down the chimney, caring for the class guinea pigs over vacation, fighting with a younger sister, building with Popoids, holding a baby chick. I was struck by the relaxed and comfortable feeling in the room and the deep engagement of the children in their work. Mrs. Seltzer had told the children to "write" however they could. As I walked around the room, I saw some of the children "writing" their stories in pictures.



P.1 My brother and I are playing in a tree.
P.2 My brother went too far out on a branch.
P.3 My brother fell down.
P.4 My father drove my brother to the hospital.

There were others who used a few letters with their drawings.

But many children, including my daughter, were already so comfortable using letters to write words that they wrote their stories first and illustrated them later.

Mrs. Seltzer did not expect the children to use proper spelling in the beginning. That would come later. Rather, she taught the children to say the words slowly and to write down the letters standing for the sounds they heard—whatever letters made sense to the child. She accepted without criticism all of their early attempts at spelling and praised the children for their willingness to take a risk. This encouragement was crucial for children like Rebecca who are so afraid of being wrong they won't try something they're not sure of. If these children were criticized for spelling incorrectly, their willingness to write independently could well come to an abrupt stop.

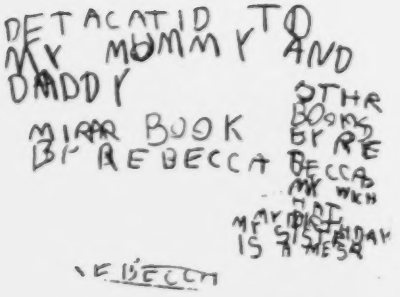
Mrs. Seltzer moved around the room visiting with one child at a time: listening, smiling, hugging, here and there offering a hint or teaching a new skill, obviously delighting in "her" children and their stories. As she moved around the room, Mrs. Seltzer helped children listen carefully to the sounds in the words they wanted to write. When a child was stuck—"What letter makes the /sh/ sound? I don't know any letter 'sh,' " Benjamin complained,—Mrs. Seltzer was right there to teach a desperate writer some of the nuances of English spelling. Her interest in their stories, appreciation for their efforts, and gentle nudges to try new skills spurred the writers on.

When I first learned about Writing Workshop, an hour a day four to five times a week seemed like an awful lot of time for kindergartners to spend on any one activity, and spending an entire hour at one stretch seemed particularly unlikely.

But on the day I observed, I was astonished to see that over an hour passed before Mrs. Seltzer called the children together for a "share" meeting. As I thought about it, I realized that the children could sustain the work for so long because, in this setting, writing was as natural an activity for kindergartners as playing in the sand. Kindergartners could easily play in the sand at the beach all day long. Some would build elaborate castles with tunnels and towers which might take all day to build, others would build several simpler structures. They would talk to one another as they planned and built the structures, exchanging ideas and techniques as they went along. And they would want to show off their castles to family and friends.

Similarly, in Mrs. Seltzer's Writing Workshop some children spent several days on one long story, others wrote several short ones in a day. They exchanged ideas and techniques with each other as they wrote and at the end of each writing period they had a time to "show off," that is, to read their stories to the group. In Writing Workshop Rebecca was not called upon to act in ways that were unnatural for a five-year-old. She loved to draw, to talk to her friends, to tell other people what was going on in her life. No wonder Rebecca loved to write. In Writing Workshop, she could write about her experiences, her joys and sorrows, her fears and aggravations, and get a sympathetic audience every time.

Mrs. Seltzer convinced the children that they were authors by treating them like real writers. Professional writers discuss ideas and writing strategies with each other, and so did the kindergartners. Professional writers deal with their ideas in their early drafts and save proofreading for spelling and punctuation for the final draft just prior to submitting the manuscript or filing the report. The kindergarten children also concentrated on their ideas first, spelling the best they could by themselves. Later, if they wanted to "publish" the piece, it would be made into a small book with standard spelling and placed in the class library. Some children preferred to "publish" themselves. They recopied their stories using special pens and paper set aside for this purpose.



Dedicated to my mummy
and daddy

Mirror Book
By Rebecca

Other books by Rebecca

My Witch Hat
My Birthday
My Sister is a Mess

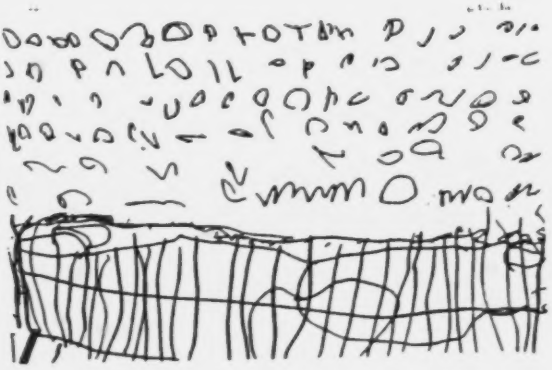
This title page demonstrates Rebecca's belief in herself as an author

Activities throughout the year reinforced the notion that they were writers. When the class ran a store which sold peanuts, raisins, and other snacks, the children prepared all the signs and forms themselves. They wrote their own bulletin board titles, classroom signs, and notes to teachers and administrators. Mrs. Seltzer even encouraged the children to write their own absence excuses—signed by a parent, of course.

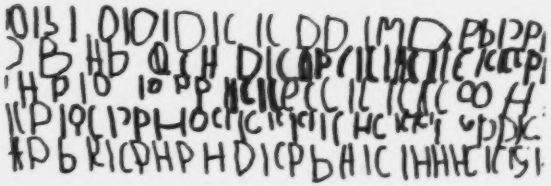
Rebecca told me the kind of writing they did was called "magic writing" because "if you can write it you can read it." Since few kindergartners can read, this is, indeed, magic to them. But to me, the real magic was that this procedure gave children confidence in their ability to figure things out for themselves.

INVENTED SPELLING

"Magic writing," or invented spelling, where children use whatever knowledge they have about letters and the sounds they represent, is simply what children use before they learn the standard spellings of words. Even before they know there are letters, many children imitate writing with squiggles and lines and loops.



Later, they may write letters they have seen, but in no particular order.



When a child realizes that letters represent sounds, he can use letters to stand for the sounds he distinguishes in words.

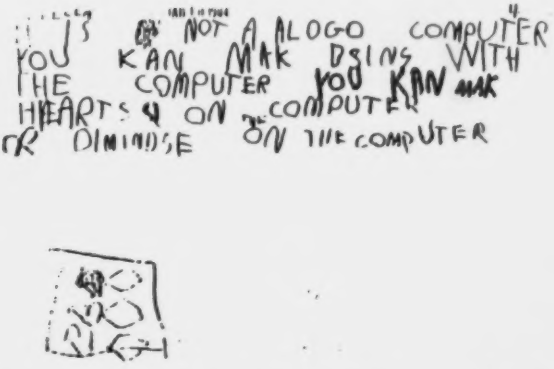
This is how it works. A girl who can isolate the /d/ sound at the beginning of a word might draw a picture of her father and write a "D" under it for "Daddy."

Another child, in addition to noticing the initial /d/ sound, might also notice the final long /e/ sound, and, reasoning that the letter "E" must stand for the long /e/ sound, would write "D-E" to represent "Daddy." A third child might notice the /d/ sound in the middle of the word, and write "D-D-E" for "Daddy." Certain peculiarities of invented spelling become more understandable when you realize that the young children use the name of the letter and the feel of the word in their mouths to guide them. "Chair" might come out "H-R" because "h" is the logical letter for the /ch/ sound and "when" might come out "Y-N" because your mouth makes the /w/ sound when saying the letter "Y." "My" is often spelled "M-I" and "are" just "R." The logic that lies behind these invented spellings is amazing.

Adults who give young children the chance to experiment with spellings are releasing the children's innate capacity to teach themselves how letters fit together to make words. When young children believe they are writers, they put their own formidable energy in the service of learning to write. They become vacuum cleaners for information that will help them solve writers' problems, and a critical writer's problem for five, six and seven-year-olds is how to spell. They use street signs, posters, cereal boxes, books, magazines, license plates, calendars, TV commercials—anything that will give them clues. Over time, the constant attention

they give to the print around them moves children closer to standard spelling. In one of Rebecca's stories she first spelled "computer" "C-I-N-P-Y-O-D-R" but later in the story spelled it correctly. I asked her what happened. She explained that the first time she didn't know how to spell "computer" so she just sounded it out the best she could, but later she noticed the word printed on the class computer and copied it.

My papa and grandma have a computer. They let us have the computer.



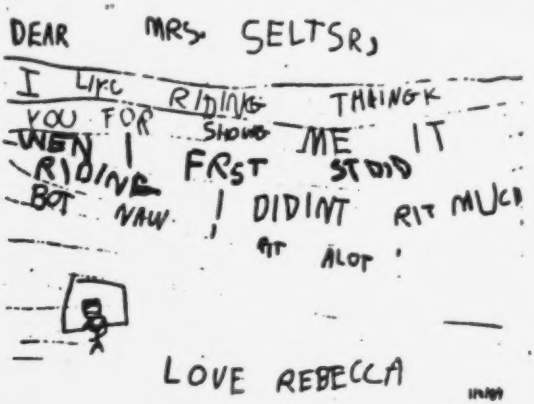
It is not a Logo computer. You can make designs with the computer. You can make hearts on the computer or diamonds on the computer.

Children know when they are inventing a spelling; it just takes time for them to absorb enough information about English orthography to spell most words accurately. Young children feel such joy when they realize they can express themselves in writing that it is a shame to hold them back waiting for their spelling to catch up with their ideas.

CONCLUSION

Writing Workshop does not end in kindergarten. Classes where students write and share their writing in a collegial atmosphere can exist at all levels. As the students get older, their pieces become longer and encompass a range of subjects and forms. But the essence of Writing Workshop remains the same: Treat student authors the same way we treat professional authors. It is just as important for older students to have regular, frequent times for sustained writing, to share their writing with peers as well as the teacher, to write on topics of their own choice—topics they really care about—and to take the time needed to wrote as well as they possibly can. Older students are encouraged to write multiple drafts, just as serious adult writers do, working on content and organization in early drafts and on word choice and mechanics in final drafts. While five and six-year-olds often require the help of adults to publish their work in standard spelling, older students produce their own final copies.

All kinds of students learn to write and to love writing in Writing Workshops. Writing Workshops have been used successfully with students of all abilities, and with the deaf, the learning disabled, and children who are not native speakers of English. It has been used in city schools, rural schools, suburban schools, in some of the poorest school districts, and some of the wealthiest districts. All that is needed are teachers with the belief that children can write, and the patience to help them along.



Dear Mrs. Seltzer,

I like writing. Thank you for showing me it. When I first started writing I didn't write much but now I write a lot.

Love,
Rebecca

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

During the pre-school and early school years, parents have immense influence over their children's language development. We can't guarantee that all of our

children will become writing superstars, but we can create a climate at home which fosters successful writers.

Here are a few things any parent can do:

Reading

Read to your child daily starting as early as possible. Six months old is not too young although your session will be short. Continue until your child no longer allows it. Do not stop just because your child has learned to read. Read-aloud time should be a warm, relaxing, cuddly time. Children will associate those good feelings with reading, becoming avid readers themselves.

Written language is different from spoken language. The more familiar your child is with the language of books, the easier it will be for him to write well when the time comes. Learning to read will also be easier if the language of stories is familiar. Good literature is the best writing teacher.

Writing

Let your child see you write. Comment on what you are doing so he or she will learn why people write. You don't need to be writing a novel—telephone messages, notes on a calendar, thank-you letters, etc. will do just fine.

Be sure to point out any difficulties you might be having, or mistakes you have made so that your child knows that writing is hard work for everyone and that it is acceptable to make mistakes.

Be on the lookout for situations which invite your young child to write. Five-year-olds can label containers of leftover food, assist in writing shopping lists or write a short message of their own when you write to a friend or relative. Children who routinely interrupt their parents when their parents are talking on the telephone (all of my children, for instance) can be asked to deliver the message in writing. A family message board near the refrigerator or telephone—a necessity in many busy families—is an invitation to all members of the family to write as well as a very concrete illustration of the usefulness of written communication.

Talking

Take the time to share ideas, observations and concerns with each other in a relaxed and comfortable way. True conversation with your child (not lectures or interrogations) will help build self-esteem as well as language. Both are essential for success in writing.

Through conversation you can also help your child become an astute observer of the world around him or her. Good writers are careful observers.

Materials

Provide an assortment of materials that invite writing: pens, pencils, markers, chalk and chalkboard, crayons, note pads, stationary, paper of all shapes and sizes. Leave these materials in plain view in a place your child can reach easily.

Support, Don't Criticize

Support all of your child's efforts at writing, no matter how primitive they seem.

Respond to the content of the writing: laugh, cry, smile, cheer, mount it on the refrigerator, but do not criticize lapses in mechanics.

It takes years to develop proficiency in spelling and punctuation. Pointing out every error does not speed up the process, and it can undermine a child's confidence. An occasional gentle hint to check the spelling or capitalization in a particular paragraph will probably do no harm, but zealous hunting for every error can be quite destructive. An undue emphasis on mechanical correctness in the early years leads to dull writing. The child learns to play it safe, sticking to simple words and sentences she knows she can write correctly rather than attempting to express more complex ideas which require complex sentences and a rich vocabulary. For beginning writers, confidence is far more important than correctness. Kids actually have more difficulty with mechanics if they become self-conscious about it.

In the long run, direct school-type lessons are far less effective for developing a strong writer in your family than reading, talking and modeling your own writing. If you insist on "teaching" letters and sounds at home, keep it light and fun. Use magnetic letters on the refrigerator to write silly messages to one another, play rhyming games (Raffi songs are great) and answer your child's questions about letters and words as simply and directly as possible. If your child wants to know what a word is, tell him. Don't make him "sound it out." Above all, stop as soon as your child's interest begins to flag, if not sooner. The one sure way to ruin a child's innate interest in writing and reading is to make her work at it when she doesn't want to.

REFERENCES

Bissex, G. (May, June 1984). Appreciate that creative spelling. *Family Learning*.

Bissex, G. (March, April 1984). Making it fun to write at home. *Family Learning*.

Calkins, L. M. (1986). *The art of teaching writing*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Calkins, L. & Harwayne, S. (1987). *The writing workshop: A world of difference*. (videotape). Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Graves, D. & Stuart, V. (1985). *Write from the start: Tapping your child's natural writing ability*. New York: E. P. Dutton.

Sowers, S. (1982). Six questions teachers ask about invented spelling. In Newkirk, T. & Atwell, N. (Eds.). (pp. 47-54). Chelmsford, MA: Northeast Regional Exchange. *Understanding writing: Ways of observing, learning, and teaching*. Chelmsford, MA: Northeast Regional Exchange.

LITERACY: ISSUES AND PRACTICES, Volume 7, 1990

Using the Paraprofessional to Extend Whole Language Activities

Susan Helldorfer
St. Mary's County Public Schools

After working for seven years in middle school with gifted students, I found myself back at an elementary school as a Chapter I Resource Teacher. I was not prepared for all the changes that had taken place, especially in reading and writing. Big books, predictable pattern books, tape recorders for choral reading, and journals were all over the building. Teachers were using more literature, kids were writing responses. There was now an emphasis on reading strategies rather than skills as teachers moved towards the integration of reading, writing, listening and speaking. All the research findings of the last two decades had not only found their way into regular classrooms, but they had been streamlined into effective strategies.

I was delighted to be housed with our building reading specialist. She had subtly influenced reading instruction by working in classrooms and demonstrating strategies with new teachers. We had been in graduate school and worked together before. Over the years, children's literature had become an integral part of her reading program. Observing her smooth easy style of combining literature with writing and reading strategies swiftly brought me up-to-date.

Part of my responsibility as a resource teacher was to work with the Chapter I paraprofessionals, checking their schedules, monitoring their recordkeeping and their lesson plans. It was clear that in their small groups, paraprofessionals focused on the smaller parts of reading: phonic skills, structural analysis, vocabulary drill, etc. Although classroom teachers were current in the field of reading and classroom instruction had evolved accordingly, the instructional practices of paraprofessionals had not changed.

Examining the needs of our Chapter I population, I discovered that children identified to receive Chapter I services from the paraprofessional are disadvantaged readers. Their exposure to literature is limited to the school environment. Their homes are not print rich; magazines and newspapers are not delivered; trips to the library are not frequent. Disadvantaged readers are not being read to daily at home. Since they have limited opportunities to appreciate literature, disadvantaged readers are not familiar with authors and do not like to read and write. After observing some of our second graders still struggling in preprimers and primers, it was clear to me that they have not experienced a great volume of reading material. They therefore do not have a broad knowledge of vocabulary. Often language develop-

ment is delayed so they are not integrating knowledge of grammar, phonics and language mechanics into the process of reading.

I knew that students at this elementary school were being exposed to an integration of reading, writing, listening and speaking. Teachers were doing this daily but it was usually a whole group experience. When the teacher read a story, the disadvantaged readers were not the ones questioning and making observations about the illustrations nor were they predicting story events. The disadvantaged readers were not using their prior knowledge and bringing their background of experiences into play. Instead they sat quietly, not participating. Yes, they were being exposed on a regular basis, but in a class of 25 students their opportunity to participate was limited. It seemed logical that literature and language experiences in a small group setting would be powerful.

Consider the implications of providing these experiences in a small group setting. Disadvantaged readers could not rely on highly able, more verbal students to respond, therefore could not imitate their responses. They would have to formulate their own. In a small group setting, responding would be less threatening. What a perfect supportive environment for encouraging risk taking!

Examine the whole language philosophy (Heald-Taylor, 1989). Its roots in oral language development means that reading and writing are reviewed as a natural process learned holistically, from whole to part. Kids experience large chunks of whole meaningful language in real interactions. They listen to a whole story at story time, retell a complete story, write messages with intended purpose and meaning.

In contrast is the skill-based philosophy where language and reading are learned part to whole. Small segments of language are introduced. As kids master each, they are exposed to larger segments. Reading and writing experiences are delayed until vocabulary, spelling, and penmanship are mastered. At this school, although elements of both philosophies existed in every classroom, the skill-based philosophy predominated in Chapter I groups led by the paraprofessional.

THE TRAINING

While pondering where to begin, our reading specialist said, "Start with prediction." That made sense. The first inservice activity with the paraprofessionals focused on prereading activities, ways to get kids to talk about what they already knew, and how to encourage them to use the title and picture clues to predict. We watched a videotape of the reading specialist using a wordless picture book with a small group. In the follow-up, the group webbed the sequence of events in the story. The videotape was simple, and it was easy to direct attention to the prereading activities. The media specialist brought a stack of predictable books. There was some excitement and lots of discussion about ideas for particular books. Planning a simple written response was encouraged.

One paraprofessional chose the book, *Ask Mr. Bear*, because one of her groups was studying the letter "B" that week. Each paraprofessional chose a book and left with plans to use it with at least one group during the month. Results were to be shared at the following inservice. A brief summary of the inservice and the "assignment" was given to each classroom teacher so time would be allowed for

paraprofessionals to complete the activity. The reading specialist had listened to the session and agreed we were on the right track. Having her there to support this project proved to be invaluable. Paraprofessionals already felt comfortable discussing ideas for activities with her and during the following week questions filtered back to me through her.

Results were tremendous, much more elaborate than I expected. Logical follow-ups flowed from the activity. Our second grade paraprofessional made copies of each student's written response, enough for each child in the group. We would meet regularly in the copying room over the next few months. She always had a new idea. Satisfied that everyone was comfortable with prereading, I felt we were ready for the second "layer."

Our second activity was a think-aloud (Davey, 1983) a procedure to be used during reading of a story. I had read Chris Van Allsberg's *Jumanji* with third graders. It is a strange, incongruous, twilight zone kind of a book that encourages discussion and prediction. It makes it easy to model reading and fix–up strategies. For example, stop and ask "What are you thinking?" and model the response, "I'm thinking . . . In my mind I'm seeing . . . What are you seeing?" "Where did the water come from to make the steam? Let's look back and see." I actually read *Jumanji* to the paraprofessionals, eliciting responses and modeling the behaviors. After the story we discussed behaviors they should model, such as: looking back, stopping and thinking, slowing down, reading on. During the next month they were to incorporate thinking aloud into their literature activity.

Our third inservice activity involved using predictable pattern books and big books for shared reading. Initially, I wanted to expose the paraprofessionals to another teaching style and make them comfortable reading and rereading a story and encouraging kids to predict. I had a videotape of one of our reading specialists reading *Poor Old Polly*, a predictable pattern book, with a group of first graders. In the videotape, along with the shared reading, she actually plans and executes a pattern book with the group. Although the paraprofessionals were encouraged to focus on the pre-reading activities and the shared reading strategy, our second grade paraprofessional did feel comfortable producing a pattern book.

ASSESSMENT

As a final evaluation of the inservice program, each paraprofessional planned a small group literature activity with their classroom teacher and invited me in to observe. What did I see? . . . Prereading discussions that elicited observations about the pictures and title. . . . Clear purpose setting and consistent modeling of strategies that encouraged the adjustment of predictions to match the text. Most important of all were the active discussions—risk-taking in a supportive environment—it was all there. By now, paraprofessionals were on a regular schedule of using literature with their groups at least once a month and as often as once a week.

SUMMARY

Yes, there are benefits to paraprofessionals leading whole language extensions with their small groups. Child-centered literature activities encourage kids to be actively involved. Children engage in real language events that interrelate listening,

speaking, reading, and writing. Oral language development is encouraged and thinking is facilitated. Children are exposed to literature that is high quality, stimulating and blessedly unabridged. They hear it read to them; they read it themselves, write about it, and illustrate it.

Consider the opportunities whole language extensions afford. Children appreciate literature, become familiar with authors, and experience a greater volume of reading material. Certainly, their vocabulary knowledge will broaden and opportunities for integrating grammar, phonics and syntax into the process of reading will occur naturally.

Yes, disadvantaged readers will benefit from whole language extensions led by the paraprofessional.

REFERENCES

Davey, B. (1983). Think aloud—modeling the cognitive processes of reading comprehension. *Journal of Reading, 27,* 44-47.

Flack, M. (1932). *Ask Mr. Bear.* NY: Macmillan.

Heald-Taylor, G. (1989). *The administrator's guide to whole language.* Katonah, NY: Richard C. Owen.

Van Allsburg, C. (1981). *Jumanji.* MA: Houghton Mifflin.

FOURTH·OF·JULY

READING · TIME

Available from Children's Book Council, P.O. Box 706, NY, NY 10276-0706

LITERACY: ISSUES AND PRACTICES, Volume 7, 1990

Using a Language Experience Approach with Reluctant Writers in the Middle School

Barbara E. Walker
Baltimore County Schools

In most educational systems, the writing program involves engaging students in the writing process for instruction. This process involves prewriting activities, writing, and rewriting. The purpose of these stages is to help students organize their approach to writing. It is also common for teachers to model the process for students. The problem for reluctant writers is that often they do not relate to the modeling of the teacher's ideas, the teacher's vocabulary, or the teacher's writing style. If students have not made the connection independently by the time they enter middle school, they need guided practice in order actively to assume these thinking responsibilities.

Vygotsky (1978) states that cognitive development requires experts to provide input to novices and to remove their input gradually as the novices become more proficient. If teacher modeling of the writing process does not provide this gradual lessening of support, the Language Experience Approach can be adapted to provide the bridge between teacher dependence and independent use of the writing process.

LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE APPROACH

The Language Experience Approach, once widely used in elementary schools, is a total language program involving speaking, listening, reading, and writing. It advocates of the use of student-generated stories based on shared experiences to teach students all aspects of the language. Stahl & Miller (1989) underscore the importance of a child's own language as a "bridge" from oral to written language in beginning reading. It is equally important in the acquisition of writing skills. Stories developed together and based on shared experiences can help students internalize the writing process through cooperative learning. It is the guided practice that has been missing from the standard writing model. This can be inserted easily between teacher modeling and independent writing.

STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

This approach was tried last summer with ten middle school students, all reading at least one year below grade level. These students were attending a five week program at the University of Maryland Summer Reading Clinic. During the academic year they attended either public or parochial schools in two Maryland

counties. Since they came from different programs, some time was spent discussing how writing was taught in their "regular" schools. They had all learned some writing strategies through previous experience. Five said they wrote in journals, two said they could choose their own topics, and not one of them liked to write.

The clinician introduced the clinic's writing program and modeled the process involved in selecting and developing a writing topic. At the end of the introduction, some began to write reluctantly, but others just stared at the paper in front of them with a look of dread. It became obvious that these students needed guided practice before they would be ready to write independently.

The students were asked if they could think of a place that would be more exciting than reading clinic. Hands were flying. The clinician asked for specific ideas about what they would want at this new place. The ideas came fast as the clinician wrote the suggestions on the board. Everyone contributed something: a tropical island, no adults, rock bands twenty-four hours a day, beach houses with hot tubs, free junk food. When asked if they would like to write about this place, there was unanimous excitement. The clinician asked if there were any items on the list that were similar. One student said there was a lot of "stuff" about what there was to do. "Things to do" became Roman numeral I. The students decided what ideas would be placed under that topic. The students then came up with three other main topics: location, restrictions, and housing.

After the students read the outline aloud, they were asked for suggestions as to how to begin the story. One student's suggestion, that it could be an advertisement for a teenage paradise, was greeted with approval. The clinician required each student to respond with a sentence based on the outline. One student responded, "I don't know," and the clinician recorded that response. When the student objected, he was told that changes could be made during the revision. The students went on and finished the story. They had fun reading it aloud, "I don't know" and all. The students had now completed the prewriting and writing stages. The next lesson would encourage them to evaluate their writing as readers.

The second day each student had a copy of the story. After reading the story silently and orally, they decided to delete "I don't know" and made some good changes in word choices. They also added sentences to expand ideas and dropped a sentence that they felt did not belong. When they reached a consensus, the story was complete. The clinician copied the story on a large piece of paper and displayed it.

On the third day each student was given a triple-spaced copy of the "finished" story. They were asked to recall the original objective for writing. The students said that they were supposed to tell about a place where they would rather be than at clinic. Students were reminded that a multiple-author story includes everyone's ideas. The clinician further commented that all ten of them had pictured the same place. One student raised his hand and said that he didn't like the beach and would rather have a big amusement park. This led others to express changes they would like. The clinician suggested that they take their copy of the story and revise it to make it a teenage paradise especially for them. It was amazing how fast those

pencils started to write. After making changes, students copied their modified stories into their journals and shared them with the class.

The following week, students were given a choice of doing a group story or working independently. Three left the group and worked on their own. By the end of the fifth week, all ten were writing independently. The Language Experience Approach involving student–generated stories gave reluctant writers the opportunity to be successful while internalizing the cognitive process of writing.

REFERENCES

Stahl, S. A., & Miller, P. D. (1989). Whole language and language experience approach for beginning reading: A quantitative research synthesis. *Review of Educational Research, 50*(1), 87-116.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Press.

INTERNATIONAL LITERACY YEAR
1990

Available from Children's Book Council

LITERACY: ISSUES AND PRACTICES, Volume 7, 1990

Teacher Participation in a Primary Screening Project

Patricia M. Russavage
Lettie Marshall Dent Elementary School
Mechanicsville, MD

THE PROBLEM

"How will I ever be able to instruct my second grade students effectively when their instructional reading levels range from readiness to 3-2? I'll have to have seven or eight reading groups!" This dilemma is faced by many classroom teachers at the beginning of each new school year. Despite efforts to look at records of student performance from the end of the previous year as well as from Chapter I testing and various other school system assessment procedures, teachers frequently face an instructional range of reading abilities in their classrooms that is so wide it defies effective instruction.

This problem appears to be even more pronounced in the primary grades where instructional levels of students are less stable and can change dramatically over summer vacation. Some students participate in tutoring, library programs, and independent reading, while others spend the entire summer in a "printless environment." The problem is further complicated by the number of new students who transfer in at the beginning of the year without adequate information about their current performance levels.

An additional concern is that while classroom teachers have all had the required reading coursework, few have had extensive training in diagnosis and feel comfortable in this area. Faced with a situation such as the one described above, classroom teachers are likely to experience much frustration.

AN ATTEMPTED SOLUTION

Teachers at one non-Chapter I elementary school assessed their particular situation and attempted to create more effective instructional groupings by reducing the range of instructional levels in a given classroom. In order to do this, a *Primary Screening Battery* was developed and implemented.

The Primary Screening Battery

The Primary Screening Battery consisted of the following parts:

Letter Recognition Test
Phonics Test
Word Recognition Test
Oral Reading Passages
Parent Survey

The Letter Recognition Test simply required students to identify the upper and lower case letters of the alphabet in random order. (Being able to sing the alphabet song was not sufficient!) The Phonics Test measured application of initial and final consonant sounds and rhyming words. A Word Recognition test was developed by randomly selecting 20 words taught in each of the basal readers (primer through 3-2) in use at the school. Using the actual materials students would use later provided a stronger relationship between test performance and instruction. Additionally, 100 word passages were randomly selected from the same reading books to measure oral reading accuracy. The standard criterion of 95% accuracy was applied to determine instructional level on this test.

Participants

All teachers of grades K-2 as well as special education teachers, media specialist, speech/language therapist, reading resource teacher, and the principal were trained to administer the battery and make the necessary decisions at each step that determine which parts of the battery should be selected for each student. Test administrators followed up with comprehension questions with those students who were able to read the passages. The principal conducted 50 of the 136 screenings on dates prior to the opening of school. Each teacher involved in the screening process conducted approximately ten screenings on one of the professional days before students returned to school. After all students were screened, classroom teachers, specialists, and the principal met as a team to review the results, make final recommendations, and develop class lists. Classes were designed to be heterogeneous but with a smaller number of instructional reading levels contained in each classroom.

The Parents' Role

Letters were sent to parents of incoming first and second grade students requesting that parents call the school to schedule a 20 minute appointment for their child on one of the designated screening dates during the last two weeks of August. The reasons for the screening were explained in the letter, and parents were informed that each student would be screened prior to being given a classroom assignment.

Parents completed a survey that asked them to note any concerns they had about their child in any of the following areas: fine motor coordination, gross motor skills, social skills, speech/language, and academic. They also were asked to describe their child's attitude towards reading and ability to read on a scale of very good, good, fair, or poor. This enabled the team to identify situations where

parents' perceptions differed greatly from student performance and to deal with these discrepancies in a more realistic and effective manner.

TEACHER ASSESSMENT OF THE PROJECT

At the end of the first month of school, teachers who participated in the Primary Screening Project were surveyed to determine their reactions to the new procedure.

There was strong agreement that the screening battery was easy to understand and administer. All of the teachers surveyed (N = 10) reported that they felt comfortable with the screening procedures and instruments. Teachers also agreed that the screening was helpful in identifying students with potential learning problems and that the overall benefits of the screening outweighed the time invested.

Teachers indicated that since under normal circumstances they spent from three to 15 days at the beginning of the school year on initial diagnosis and forming instructional reading groups, as much as three weeks of instruction were saved by the new procedure.

Other comments emphasized the importance of the narrative comments shared by test administrators during the group meeting. One teacher responded that the Primary Screening Project "sent a positive message to parents about how strongly this school feels about reading."

When asked if the procedure should be continued, there was unanimous agreement that it should. There was also a recommendation to include incoming kindergartners as well.

OUTCOMES

A comparison of students' instructional levels determined by the Primary Screening Battery with the levels indicated by last spring's data revealed the following.

1. Of the 136 first and second grade students, 15 were new to the school and arrived with no information regarding instructional levels.
2. Twenty-one of the students were placed higher than their spring performance indicated.
3. Eighteen were placed at a lower level than end-of-year data would have suggested.
4. A total of 39 students (29%) began instruction at a different level from that which was indicated by end-of-year data. When combined with the 15 new students, the result was that for 54 (40%) of the first and second grade students we had inaccurate or missing information regarding their initial placement.

While parents were not formally surveyed after the screening process, the degree of participation alone (85% scheduled appointments and brought their children in for screenings) indicated a very positive response. Of the students who did not come in, 13 were screened during "Classroom Visitation Day" which is the day before students return. The remaining seven were screened by specialists during the first hour on the first day of school.

Many parents commented enthusiastically about how much they appreciated the screenings. They agreed that this procedure would lead to more appropriate classroom assignments and reduce the amount of time needed at the beginning of the year for initial diagnosis. Parents began to understand some of the factors involved in determining classroom assignments.

Several parents reported that they had done additional work with their children after receiving the screening notice. A few even brought in some of the books and materials their children had worked on to show us. And . . . to the delight of teachers who had spent hours last spring putting practical packets together for students in need of additional work over the summer, some parents brought in the completed packets!

CONCLUSION

As a direct result of the Primary Screening Project the following occurred:

1. Classroom teachers developed greater skill in diagnosis and had more input into determining class lists.
2. The amount of time needed for diagnosis during the first days of school was reduced, meaning that regular instruction began immediately.
3. More homogeneous classroom groupings enabled teachers to work with a realistic range of instructional abilities.
4. More accurate and specific communication with parents was possible as they received feedback and recommendations for working with their children at home immediately after the screening.
5. Some students with potential learning difficulties were identified at the time of screening instead of after several weeks in the classroom.
6. During the team discussions, teachers became very aware of the problems associated with determining "instructional levels." This underscored the need to maintain flexibility in grouping for instruction.

Perhaps one of the greatest outcomes of all was the opportunity for a staff to identify a problem and work through the problem-solving process together to achieve a very workable solution. This process did much to facilitate communication and an interchange of ideas among the staff members. Students were not the only ones to benefit from this team-centered approach to classroom assignments!

LITERACY: ISSUES AND PRACTICES, Volume 7, 1990

"Comprehension System 8" A Teacher's Perspective

Barbara L. Eddy
Karen A. Gould
St. Mary's County Public Schools

Comprehending the written word can begin even before reading takes place, and comprehension can increase as reading strategies develop. Higher level thinking strategies can be modeled as early as kindergarten to establish reading for meaning. These thought processes can be given labels and visual cues which aid in reading comprehension.

We, the authors, are most fortunate to be a part of the staff involved in the school-wide Comprehension System 8 Strategies developed by our faculty assisted by Dr. Patricia Russavage and Dr. Robert Wilson. This comprehension program can easily be adapted to reflect the instructional preferences of students and teachers at any grade level.

IMPLEMENTATION AT THE PRIMARY LEVEL

Comprehension System 8 (Comp 8) at the primary level is most effectively introduced as a storytime teaching guide for developing critical thinking strategies.

Using the first three steps of Comp 8, *LOOK*, *THINK*, and *PREDICT*, increases listening and reading comprehension at the beginning of formal reading instruction. These steps, combined with readiness and beginning-reading activities, provide students with a variety of non-threatening and motivational practice in associating meaning with written text. To enhance motivation and provide concrete learning experiences, manipulatives have been added to use with each comprehension step. "Big Books" are another excellent concrete tool which aid in the effectiveness of this program. At the primary level, it is crucial to introduce each step sequentially, one at a time, providing repeated practice experiences before moving on to the next step.

PROCEDURE

As early as the first day of kindergarten, begin making storytime an integral part of the program. Establish a relaxed atmosphere by playing a quiet "Music Box" song used as an auditory clue that storytime is about to begin. Once the children have learned that the music is associated with storytime, they quickly and quietly gather around the "Reading Rocker," anticipating this sharing moment.

To introduce the first comprehension step, *LOOK*, the teacher sits in the

"Reading Rocker" wearing over-sized clown-type glasses (renamed by the students as "*Lookers*"). Allow the children to brainstorm about how and why the glasses can help us during storytime. Once they have discovered that the glasses can help us *LOOK* at the pictures as we read, demonstrate and practice the *LOOK* concept by reading *Each Peach, Pear, Plum* by Alan and Janet Ahlberg. This book has delightful illustrations to use in emphasizing the *LOOK* step.

After reading the story, break into small groups. An excellent follow up activity is to have the children make glasses or "Lookers" out of construction paper and wear them as the story is reread; this time *LOOKING* for more specific pictures to clarify meaning. The children can wear their "Lookers" home to share the new *LOOK* concept with their parents.

Now that the concept of *LOOK* has been introduced, it can be applied to other stories. Allow the children to take turns using the over-sized glasses as they respond to what they see in the pictures. Motivation and concrete use of the glasses allow students to take a more active part in storytime. They are building oral language skills, listening comprehension, and, with repetition, will begin to internalize this strategy to generate meaning as they *LOOK* at the pictures. To check for understanding, the following activity can be used.

Follow up activity for use in small group instruction: Give each child in the group three 5 × 7 cards. Ask the children to draw pictures that helped them remember:

1. The beginning of the story
2. The middle of the story
3. The ending of the story

Have the children swap cards with a partner and shuffle the cards before looking at them. Ask the children to put their partner's cards in sequential order and to retell the story as they use their partner's pictures. A variety of lessons can be developed from this simple activity to link "Comp 8" with Whole Language, Reading/Writing connection, L.E.A., Story Wheel, and other reading strategies.

As your students demonstrate effective use of the *LOOK* step, hang a poster-sized visual cue to reinforce the *LOOK* concept.

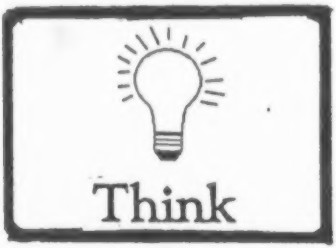
Activating prior knowledge is the major component of the *THINK* strategy in Comp 8. The goal is to use what is observed about the pictures to aid recall of what is already known in order to establish links to meaning within the written text.

Introduce the *THINK* concept to your students by reading *What do you do with a . . . ?* by Jan Demers. As you read aloud, *LOOK* in addition to *THINK* about what you already know about the pictures, using a flashlight as the manipulative with the *THINK* strategy. First model the *THINK* step as you *LOOK* at the cover of the book. Then, as you read the story, simply use text cues to *LOOK* and *THINK*, allowing the children to pass the flashlight as they verbalize their prior knowledge. This is a good time to utilize wait time before passing the flashlight so the children can gather their thoughts before they respond.

The use of manipulatives not only motivates the children to pay attention to the story, but helps to control the story discussion, and promotes responses that are on target. It is best to allow only two or three pupil responses per page.

Follow up activity for use during small group instruction: Cut a variety of pictures out of magazines, mount on construction paper, and laminate. Put the pictures into a grab bag and have children select pictures. Ask the children to *LOOK* at the selected picture and *THINK* about what they already know about this picture. Let the children pass the flashlight while taking turns telling the others in the group about their picture. Again, this activity can spark a variety of activities that will tie in with other reading skills and strategies. It is especially effective to follow up by having children write stories about their pictures to post on a bulletin board.

Continue practicing *LOOK* and *THINK* with the manipulatives as you read other stories, until students demonstrate effective use of *THINK*. Add a poster-sized visual cue below the *LOOK* poster to reinforce *THINK* at a more abstract level.



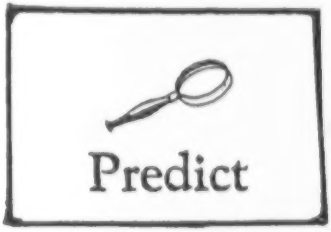
When children have combined and internalized the *LOOK* and *THINK* strategies, they should move on to the third step, *PREDICT*. To introduce the concept *PREDICT*, read *The Bear Detectives* by Stan and Jan Berenstain. *LOOK* and *THINK* as you read and discuss the story. This book demonstrates putting clues together to *PREDICT* what will happen in a story.

As other stories are read, use a magnifying glass as the manipulative, and model the *PREDICT* strategy. The children will readily make predictions about what will happen next and they can support their predictions through the use of *LOOK* and *THINK*. Again, passing the magnifying glass for pupil response allows concrete input for this sharing situation. As you read, simply give the auditory cue to *LOOK* and *THINK*. Allow wait time and have the children make and support their predictions. Read on to see what actually happens. The children cheer when they have made an accurate prediction and in most cases they do.

Follow up activity for use in small group instruction: Read a good predicting story. *LOOK*, *THINK* and *PREDICT* throughout the story. Do not read the ending. Have the children draw pictures to predict how the story will end. A variety of other strategies can be used to write an ending to the story based on their predictions.

Finish the story at the end of the day to determine whose predictions were accurate. The next day allow the children to share their versions of the ending of the story with the class.

Of course, add another poster-sized visual cue to reinforce the concept, *PREDICT*.



The three posters can be hung together in the reading area as constant reminders of the steps to use when reading a story. Manipulatives can be placed in a "Magic Story Bag" for easy access throughout this process. Put the story bag in a special area in your classroom with a variety of big books. The children enjoy practicing these steps independently and with classmates in the reading corner during "Center Time."

This instruction is a lengthy process. It should take at least the first half of the year to implement effective use of the three initial comprehension steps. Once this has been done successfully and adequate practice of each step has taken place, the comprehension steps become automatic processes used by students at all levels of learning in all subject areas. Continue using *LOOK*, *THINK*, and *PREDICT* during storytime. Include these steps during small group instruction in conjunction with other reading strategies and skills being taught in your classroom. You will find your students successfully using *LOOK*, *THINK*, and *PREDICT* as they become active readers, with good comprehension.

IMPLEMENTATION AT THE INTERMEDIATE LEVEL

In the intermediate grades the comprehension strategies are expanded. *LOOK*, *THINK*, *PREDICT*, and *PICTURE* are used before and during reading. Thinkalong helps to promote these strategies (Russavage & Arick, 1988). Verbalizing thought during reading helps students construct text meaning.

Using these four Comp 8 strategies to begin a reading exercise often motivates the reluctant reader to participate. During the lesson students verbalize (Thinkalong), relying on the strategies to guide thought.

To get to this point in the Comp 8 System, visual symbol cues are incorporated into the program. As in the earlier grades each strategy—*LOOK*, *THINK*, *PREDICT*, and *PICTURE*—has a visual symbol. The students are given ample oppor-

tunity to connect the visual cue to the comprehension strategy. To motivate your students and enhance active participation, enlarge each symbol from the bookmark, color, laminate, and attach a magnet to the back. Now your symbols will adhere to the chalkboard and can be moved easily.

As the teacher begins a story and models a strategy, students are taught to identify the visual symbol. As the strategy is identified, students can put the corresponding visual symbol on the chalkboard.

Follow up activity for visual cues:

"Let's look at the title of the story."

"What do you think the story is about?"

"Look at the picture."

"Does that add meaning to the title?"

In smaller reading group situations, the same procedures can be used. Part of internalizing the use of the strategies is developing the reasoning behind why a particular symbol was chosen. In many instances, several symbols can represent a strategy. Any symbol is accepted if the student can support his selection.

When actual reading begins, the teacher can model all eight strategies, stopping to identify the visual symbol and giving further explanation as needed. Stopping and starting may seem to defeat the comprehension process; however, alerting the reader to attach a visual cue to a verbal cue enhances understanding.

Also, when you read aloud to the students, remind them with the visual symbol *PICTURE THINGS* that the pictures in their minds will help them to understand the sequence of the passage.

Follow up activity for PICTURE THINGS: Have the students draw their mental pictures in a sequential order on folded or blocked paper. Later these pictures can be cut apart for a reinforcement activity with a partner as in the primary lesson.

The visual images the students have in their minds will introduce them to the comprehension strategy *QUESTION YOURSELF*. This strategy asks the reader, "Does it make sense?" Reminding your students to question themselves is an important part of helping them be good readers and understand meanings. If their visual images are confusing to them, then their comprehension may be weak. This may be an appropriate time to introduce the next two Comp 8 strategies of *READ ON* and *REREAD*.

READ ON *and* REREAD *may be introduced using Thinkalong as follows:* "It

has been . . . er . . . brought to my attention that you girls have been spending an inordinate amount of time uptown lately . . ." (Galbraith, 1985). (I don't know what inordinate means.) READ ON to find more information.

Student reads on.

(No, I still don't know what that means.) The student then goes back and REREADS the passage.

If meaning is still confused after using *READ ON* and *REREAD*, the final strategy of *ASK SOMEONE* is appropriate. The "someone" can be a classmate, teacher, or a reference book.

After each strategy is introduced and practiced, follow up activities are helpful to help internalize their usage.

Follow up for QUESTION YOURSELF: For *QUESTION YOURSELF* each student is given a sheet of miniature *QUESTION YOURSELF* symbols. As the teacher reads and uses the strategy, the students circle a question mark and write an answer to the question if they have one. During individual reading sessions, children can use the same sheet to write down the questions they have and cross them off as they discover the answers. The same procedure can be used for *READ ON*, *REREAD*, and *ASK SOMEONE*.

To encourage the use of a variety of strategies each child can make his/her set of eight index cards with a Comp 8 symbol on each one. The cards are then shuffled and the students choose a card. That is his/her symbol for the day. The student proceeds to incorporate that strategy in all academic areas. Each time that strategy is used successfully a tally mark is put on the back of the card. This activity gives added reinforcement and evaluates effective use.

After students become comfortable with the Comp 8 strategies, more than one card can be chosen to use during the day until all strategies are used effectively.

Each of the strategies takes time to introduce and internalize. Repeated use is important, as well as discussions about how to use the strategy and when a particular strategy may be helpful to the reader.

CONCLUSION

Our personal implementation of the Comprehension System 8 method has proven to be motivational, enabling children to make noticeable gains in reading comprehension. We *PREDICT* that you will find Comp 8 a rewarding and effective means for developing strategic readers.

REFERENCES

Ahlberg, A. & Ahlberg, J. (1986). *Each peach, pear, plum*. New York: Viking Penguin.

Berenstain, S. & J. (1975). *The bear detectives*. New York: Random House.

Demers, Jan. (1985). *What do you do with a . . . ?* Ohio: Willowwisp Press.

Galbraith, K. (1985). *Something suspicious*. New York: Avon Camelot.

Russavage, P. M. & Arick, K. L. (1988). Thinkalong: A strategic approach to improving comprehension. *Reading: Issues and Practices, 5*, 32-41.

COMPREHENSION SYSTEM "8"

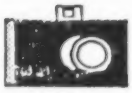
BEFORE YOU READ:

Look
at title, picture clues

Think
about what you already know

AS YOU READ:

Predict
what you think will happen



Picture Things
in your mind

Question Yourself
Does it make sense?

Read On
use context clues

Reread
silently or out loud

Ask Someone
who knows

COMPREHENSION SYSTEM "8" 1989 ©

LITERACY: ISSUES AND PRACTICES, Volume 7, 1990

The Use of Signing to Reinforce Sight Vocabulary: Teachers' Perspectives

Robert M. Wilson
University of Maryland

Cynthia T. Bowen
Baltimore County Schools

BACKGROUND

Educators are continually looking for ways to help students who have difficulty remembering sight vocabulary. Recent research indicates that the use of signing as an instructional strategy can help students retain sight vocabulary.

Artuk (1984) used sign intervention in 11 primary grades with remedial readers who experienced difficulty with the retention of sight words. During regular instruction, they retained 58% of their sight words and during sign instruction they retained 79% of their sight words.

Haller (1984) studied 10 primary grade learning disabled students to determine whether the tracing techniques (VAKT) or signing obtained better retention of sight words. These learning disabled students retained about 50% of their sight words using VAKT and nearly 100% when using signing.

Wilson and Hoyer (1985) conducted a study with 10 first grade teachers. Each teacher taught sight vocabulary to small groups of students who were having difficulty retaining their sight vocabulary. The students having the lowest retention scores with basal instruction made the greatest gains when sign instruction was incorporated into the program. However, all students did well with sign instruction.

Wilson, Teague, and Teague (1985) used fingerspelling and signing to help first graders who were having difficulty remembering their spelling words. The students remembered between 25% and 46% of the spelling words during regular instruction and between 56% and 90% during sign instruction.

BALTIMORE COUNTY PROJECT

Based on the cited research, it was decided to conduct a workshop for selected Baltimore County educators. At this workshop, forty-eight Baltimore County educators (principals, assistant principals, reading specialists, a speech-language pathologist, and classroom teachers) were asked to participate in a signing project.

The objectives of the project were to:

1. Make the educators aware of the current research related to the use of signing as a reading intervention strategy.
2. Ask the educators to use signing with their students.
3. Obtain from educators their reactions and the students' reactions to the use of signing as a reading intervention strategy.
4. Obtain data on the progress of individual students.

A study was designed to evaluate the third and fourth objectives. The results of the data relating to student progress, the fourth objective, supported the previously cited research. However, this article includes only the information related to the third objective concerning reactions to the use of signing as a reading intervention strategy.

DATA FINDING

All participants who were involved in the signing project were sent a questionnaire. The purpose of the questionnaire was to identify how the educators used signing with their students. Ten classroom teachers and five reading specialists completed and returned the questionnaire. The following information is a summary of their reactions and comments.

Of the 15 teachers, 14 reported that they had used signing with their students. One reported that he/she did not use signing.

1. Of the 14 who reported using signing:
   —9 reported using it weekly
   —3 reported using it at least once a month
   —2 reported using it less than once a month.
2. Those who reported using signing evaluated the effects of signing on sight vocabulary and student attitude as follows:

Effects of signing on sight vocabulary:	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Above average readers	6	2	0	0
Average readers	8	4	0	0
Below average readers	9	2	2	0
Special education readers	1	0	0	0

Effects of signing on student aptitude:	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
Above average readers	7	2	0	0
Average readers	9	2	0	0
Below average readers	11	0	1	0
Special education readers	2	0	0	0

Note: Not all teachers marked the questionnaire for each type of reader.

3. Eight of the teachers reported using signing in subjects other than reading as follows:
   —6 reported using it for mathematics

—5 reported using it for language arts
—5 reported using it for science
—2 reported using it for social studies

Note: Teachers reported using signing in more than one other subject area.

4. Eight of the teachers reported using signing in creative projects as follows:
   —5 reported using it for assemblies
   —1 reported using it for a faculty presentation
   —1 reported using it to sing Happy Birthday to the principal
   —1 reported using it for a buddy school program
5. All 14 teachers reported using resources. Specifically:
   —14 reported using the *Comprehensive Signed English Dictionary*
   —4 reported using a sign monitor
   —6 reported using other books and courses on signing
6. Eight teachers reported that they could use more help in signing with their children. Specifically:
   —6 reported need for a sign course
   —4 reported need for more dictionaries
   —1 reported need for a pool of resources
7. Thirteen of the teachers reported that they would recommend this strategy to other teachers.

Comments:

Many teachers added comments to the survey. They included:

—I would like to feel more comfortable in signing before using it with students.
—A wonderful way for students to learn quickly—tangible, highly motivating for students.
—Involvement of other modalities helps the student retain the information as well as makes learning more fun because it is different.
—The students were highly motivated. They were able to communicate across the room without making noise. They practiced their vocabulary much more frequently. I thoroughly enjoyed working in this mode. Thank you for the opportunity.
—The students learned and *enjoyed* the strategy.
—It should be used selectively. The teachers have to want to do it. Some students are more eager than others to learn signing.
—It is time consuming to learn and practice signs. A motivational to be used as an alternate strategy from time to time. Good for basic sight, also, I would rather give sign than tell a student a word he is unable to remember.
—Motivating approach, students are eager to practice sign and seem to retain vocabulary.
—I'm sure some teachers may find it effective, but I have trouble learning signs myself.

Of the 14 teachers who reported that they used signing as a strategy for reinforcing sight vocabulary, reactions were basically good to very good. These data

are important because they indicate that teachers found the strategy to be effective and usable. Eleven of the 14 teachers indicatel that they would appreciate additional help on the strategy. This was not unexpected since the strategy involved the use of an unfamiliar intervention—signs. Continued investigation is warranted, especially after teachers receive some of the hep they suggested.

REFERENCES

Arick, K. (1984). *Use of signs with first graders.* Unpublished graduate student paper, University of Maryland.

Hafer, J. (1984). *The effects of signing as a multisensory technique for sight vocabulary for learning disabled students.* Doctoral dissertation, University of Maryland.

Wilson, R. & Hoyer, J. (1985). The use of sign language as a reinforcement of sight vocabulary in the first grade. *Reading: Issues and practices, 1,* (1) pp. 43-51.

Wilson, R., Teague, G., & Teague, M. (1984). The use of finger spelling to improve spelling performances with hearing children. *Reading Psychology, 5* (4), pp. 267-273.

Available from Children's Book Council

BOOK REVIEWS

Teachers and Research: Language Learning in the Classroom. Gay Su Pinnell and Myna L. Matlin (Editors). Newark, Delaware. International Reading Association. 1989. Paper. 177 pp. $10.75.

Both school-based and university educators contributed to this easy-to-read book which offers 12 short chapters dealing with the implementation of whole language programs. The book closes with a 28-page reading list on whole language which is subdivided into theory, practice, and assessment.

The two opening chapters, by Mary Kitagawa and Nancy Platt, give anecdotal examples of how children can "learn language, learn through language, and learn about language" (p. 2) in whole language classrooms. A final chapter by Kenneth Goodman explains why literacy education should be a natural extension of language development. But the remaining chapters are the real meat of the book. These chapters deal with implementing whole language instruction and are permeated by two recurring themes: 1) teachers and researchers need to collaborate, and 2) conditions that produce the best learning in children also produce the best learning in teachers. These two themes merit further discussion.

First, this book argues that teachers and researchers can learn from each other, thereby improving each other's effectiveness. Teacher Vera Milz (chapter 3) describes how taking on a researcher's role in her own classroom has given her a better understanding of her students and strengthened her confidence in her teaching. Then researcher Marie Clay (chapter 4) explains how her work has benefitted from listening to teachers and how researchers can help teachers improve their instruction by teaching them techniques for systematic observation. Finally, researcher Myna Matlin and teacher Robert Wortman (chapter 5) detail the influence each had on the other as they collaborated on a year-long research project.

Second, this book advocates that learning conditions for teachers ought to parallel the conditions which whole language programs create for children. But if this is to occur, then the nature of teacher education must change. In the Foreword, Gordon Wells sets the tone for the rest of the book, arguing that educational reform requires a "major rethinking of teacher education, both preservice preparation and inservice professional development" (p. vi). Specifically, he challenges the traditional "transmission concept of learning [which he charges] is no more effective in promoting learning in teachers than it is in the students they teach" (p. vii). He argues that, for both teachers and students, "knowledge cannot be handed over ready made but must be built up anew by individuals as they bring what they already know to the encounter with new information. . . . [In other words,] the teaching-learning relationship is one not of transmission but of transaction" (p. v).

Chapters 6 through 11 address the issue of learning conditions for teachers in varying ways. Vida Welsh's (chapter 6) account of her experiences clearly indicate why effective inservice education should avoid top-down imposition of change. Then Angela Jagger (chapter 7) reflects upon how teachers, including herself, learn. She concludes that teachers need time to reflect on their own experiences, to interact among themselves, to "grapple with ideas on their own terms" (p. 71). Thus, in the same way that teachers should be collaborators with the children in their classrooms, professors and the teachers in their courses need to collaborate.

Charlotte Huck (chapter 8) describes a teacher preparation program which models the same principles teachers should use in whole language classrooms: integrated language arts, literature, and reading courses spreading over a whole year; authentic experiences; time to reflect, evaluate and talk to each other; learning skills in context; and reinforcement of learning. Similarly, Donald Monroe (chapter 9), a school superintendent, believes that "a school district ought to model the kind of climate and culture that exists in a good classroom" (p. 98). He then describes his district's efforts to create an appropriate learning environment for teachers.

An appropriate learning environment for teachers would include support groups such as Dorothy Watson and Margaret Stevenson (chapter 11) describe. Just as teachers seek to build support into their students' instruction, so teachers need support as they implement change. Watson and Stevenson illustrate how support groups provide encouragement, assistance, and confidence. They then explain how to organize such groups.

Gay Su Pinnell (chapter 10) notes that there is often a gap between what is suggested in teacher education and school practice. To illustrate her point, Pinnell contrasts concepts which might be learned in a course or an inservice workshop with contradictory school practices. One concept, for example, might be that "children develop language through interaction. They need many opportunities to talk to teachers and one another" (p. 103). In contrast, common practices include, "No talking is allowed in the cafeteria," and "Teachers' ability to have good discipline is judged by the quietness of the classroom" (p. 103). To close the gap between beliefs and practices, Pinnell believes that the school needs to be considered as an organizational whole. Policies aimed at solving discipline problems, for instance, may affect the literacy program. Thus, educational change must take into account the school as a social system. To help schools begin this endeavor, she includes an inventory for assessing a school's climate; this inventory can be used to open communication among faculty members about needed changes. She also offers general guidelines for implementing change, but notes that change needs to proceed at all levels—the classroom, building, and district levels.

Teachers who are excited about whole language will find this book helpful and will appreciate the reading list as well as the tips on such topics as organizing support groups and becoming involved in research. But they will want to give copies of the book to their principals, specialists, superintendents, and university professors. In short, this book contains a strong message to those involved in educational policy and teacher education. It should cause all who read it to reflect on the best conditions for all learners.

Mariam Jean Dreher
University of Maryland

Children's Comprehension of Text: Research into Practice. K. Denise Muth (Ed.). Newark, Delaware: International Reading Association, 1989. Paper. 280 pp. $15.75.

While I think that most of us who teach reading and writing would agree that we need to incorporate research-based strategies in our instructional planning and delivery, I also think that most of us would agree that researchers need to suggest classroom applications for their findings. However, all too often, those authors and editors who set out to translate research into practice give us works filled with either too much research or too much practice. As editor of *Children's Comprehension of Text: Research into Practice*, K. Denise Muth offers a balanced addition to our professional libraries. She has enlisted contributors who translate

cognitive and rhetorical theory into clear definitions and examples, who review recent research on text, and who suggest several practical strategies for improving students' comprehension and production of either narrative or expository text.

To begin, Muth has organized *Children's Comprehension of Text: Research into Practice* in a way that makes it very accessible. Much of that accessibility comes from its design. In her introduction, she divides the book into three distinct sections: 1) a series of chapters devoted to narrative text; 2) a series of chapters devoted to expository text; and 3) two chapters planned to provide a conclusion. Within both the narrative and expository sections, Muth extends that organization even further. In the introductory chapter to each section, the contributing authors (Fitzgerald; Slater & Graves) define and provide examples of either narrative or expository text. Additionally, they review recent research on that particular type of text. In the remaining chapters of these two sections, Muth has enlisted contributors (Glynn; Gordon; Morrow; Ogle; Peters & Carlsen; Richgels, McGee, & Slaton; Schuder, Clewell, & Jackson; Tompkins & McGee) who suggest specific classroom strategies to improve student comprehension and production of either narrative or expository text. While Muth could (and, in my opinion, most likely should) have ended the book with these two sections, she includes two further chapters dealing with research issues: one chapter (Mosenthal) on conceptualizing the comprehension process and another chapter (Nelson-Herber & Johnston) summarizing the issues discussed throughout the book. In the design of *Children's Comprehension of Text: Research into Practice*, I would argue that Muth demonstrates her own ability to organize effective text.

However, accessibility is not the only virtue of this book. Muth has enlisted contributing authors who offer a very substantial overview of both narrative and expository text. As an introduction to the narrative section, Fitzgerald defines narrative text based on five dimensions: 1) content; 2) structure; 3) style; 4) force and affect; and 5) transmission. She also provides a brief but very thorough review of research on narrative text. Her review is particularly useful because she bases it on the same five dimensions she uses to define narrative text. Finally, she reviews research related to teaching narrative text and concludes her introductory chapter by commenting on the significance of recent research to teachers.

As an introduction to the expository sections, Slater and Graves discuss four characteristics of good expository text: 1) it provides information; 2) it offers an explanation; 3) it suggests direction; and 4) it uses narration for elaboration. They also review and assess research on several dimensions related to student knowledge about expository text. Additionally, they provide a classification of expository text based on classical and modern rhetoric. They very clearly define and present the different categories in their text. While this chapter is a must for those readers who have not examined the connection between rhetoric and expository and narrative text, it is also a very useful review for those readers who have. Finally, Slater and Graves suggest a model of teaching (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983) and offer four strategies for teaching students to read expository text more effectively: 1) using structural organizers, 2) outlining, 3) summarizing, and 4) questioning.

In the remaining four chapters of both the narrative and the expository sections, several authors offer the reader three types of information: 1) a rationale for implementing a particular strategy, 2) a general unit plan for incorporating that strategy into the curriculum, and 3) specific lessons and materials related to teaching that strategy.

In the narrative section, contributing authors suggest ways in which teachers can improve students' reading comprehension by teaching the structure of narrative text. In Chapter 2, Morrow suggests retelling as an effective narrative strategy for improving reading comprehension and teaching story structure to elementary readers. She offers guidelines, a list of materials, and an outline for measuring comprehension based on retelling. In Chapter 3, Tompkins and McGee present a strategy for teaching the literary device of repetition to elementary students. Additionally, they provide a list of materials with which to implement the strategy and sample lessons for use with second graders. In Chapter 4, Gordon suggests a four-point program for teaching students in grades four through nine to apply their knowledge about the process of composing narrative text structure to both reading and writing. In

the last chapter in the narrative section, Peters and Carlsen suggest a very well organized program for improving student knowledge about two elements of story structure: 1) cultural codes, and 2) genetic codes. Using the literary framework of the mystery, they suggest planning procedures and instructional activities for teachers to use before, during, and after students read. They also argue convincingly that content goals need not be subordinated to process goals.

In the expository section, contributing authors suggest ways in which teachers can improve students' reading comprehension by teaching the structure of expository text. In Chapter 7, Richgels, McGee, and Slaton present specific strategies for improving students' recognition of how ideas are organized in expository text. They suggest a seven-step program for presenting students with several models of expository text structure, showing them how those models differ, and teaching them to apply those elements in their writing. They also provide examples of well-structured text and graphic organizers for teaching the structure of causation. Teachers could easily adapt these examples for teaching other types of expository text. In Chapter 8, Glynn offers a very compelling argument for teaching analogical reasoning to improve students' comprehension and production of expository text. She also provides a comprehensive model for teaching analogies that includes six operations: 1) introducing a target concept, 2) recalling an analog concept, 3) identifying similar features of the two concepts, 4) mapping similar features, 5) drawing conclusions about concepts, and 6) indicating where the analogy breaks down. In Chapter 9, Ogle offers an initial note-taking strategy for teaching expository text structure. She suggests that teachers first model and then direct students to complete specific note-taking activities. In these activities, students identify three types of information about their reading: 1) what they know, 2) what they want to know, and 3) what they have learned during reading. Before students read, students brainstorm and list what they already know about a particular topic on a KWL strategy sheet specifically designed for this purpose. Next, students note on the KWL strategy sheet what they anticipate learning when they read. After students read, they note on their strategy sheets what they have discovered during their reading. Ogle also offers sample lesson plans for incorporating her KWL strategy. In the last chapter of the expository section, Schuder, Clewell, and Jackson suggest a strategy that complements the KWL strategy proposed by Ogle. In order to teach hypothesis formation and evaluation of expository text, they offer seven prompts for teachers to use before, during and following reading. They also provide a sample text and a sample lesson for incorporating this strategy with sixth graders.

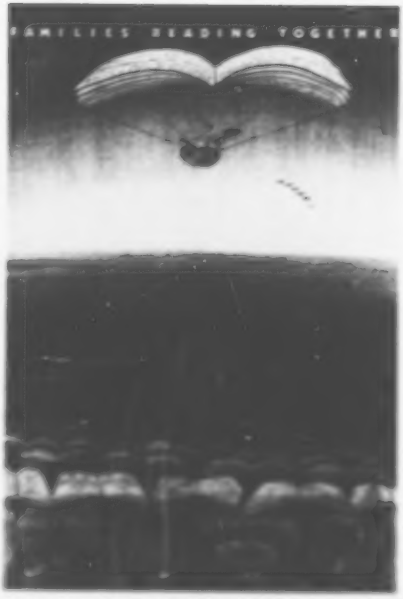
The final two chapters of *Children's Comprehension of Text: Research into Practice* are meant to summarize the chapters in the preceding two sections. And, while the authors do provide a summary, the preceding authors have done such a thorough job of reviewing both theories and research related to narrative and expository text that this section seems to be almost superfluous. In Chapter 11, Mosenthal provides another discussion of comprehension as the product of the reader's interaction with the text. He reiterates the notion that readers are limited only by their ability to analyze and interpret text. He also further explains concepts that provide the basis for some of the strategies contributing authors have presented in this text. In the final chapter, Nelson-Herber and Johnston anticipate questions teachers might ask about teaching narrative and expository text. While the authors in both the narrative and the expository sections provide a thorough discussion of research, Nelson-Herber and Johnston's discussion of teaching practices in relationship to research provides yet another review of the research on text.

I would recommend *Children's Comprehension of Text: Research into Practice* as a useful book for anyone who makes decisions about reading and writing instruction in our schools. However, it is first and foremost a practical resource for teachers. Without resorting to canned lesson plans, Muth has provided those of us who teach reading and writing with an enlarged repertoire of research-based strategies. She has also increased our knowledge about theories that provide a rationale for such strategies. Muth has also provided those of us who are both teachers and graduate students with an initial source for beginning a review of research on both comprehension and production of text. And finally, Muth has provided

those of us who are both teachers and researchers with the reassurance that someone is responsibly translating research into practice. In assessing what we know about students' comprehension of narrative and expository text, Muth has also suggested the need for a great deal more research.

Frank Horstman
Howard County Public Schools
and
University of Maryland

FAMILIES
READING
TOGETHER



Available from Children's Book Council, P.O. Box 706, NY, NY 10276-0706

Thirty-fifth Annual Convention International Reading Association Atlanta May 6-10, 1990

International Literacy Year: Celebration, Inspiration, Dedication

The 1990 IRA Annual Convention, being planned by President Dale D. Johnson and the Program Committee, will offer a rich variety of topics to meet the needs of all reading professionals.

Convention activities will take place May 6-10. The convention will include general sessions, symposia, workshops, sessions, institutes, research presentations, Chapter 1 meetings, special interest group meetings and joint meetings with other educational and governmental organizations. In addition to the professional meetings, there will be more than 550 exhibits of educational material and equipment as well as numerous social functions.

The December 1989 issue of *Reading Today* which will be sent to all IRA members will contain a special Atlanta Convention section including preregistration and housing forms.

In January all IRA members will receive a copy of the preliminary program which will contain preregistration and housing forms.

These materials will also be available upon request from IRA Headquarters, 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, Delaware 19714-8139.

Emerging Literacy: Young Children Learn to Read and Write

Dorothy S. Strickland
Lesley Mandel Morrow
Editors

Hot topic! New book from IRA!

Few topics are drawing more interest in educational circles these days than emergent literacy. A special new book from the International Reading Association offers a wealth of ideas on effective ways to help young children become readers and writers.

With contributions by many leaders in the field of emergent literacy, this book represents a valuable addition to the literature in this vital area. Like the IRA bestseller *Children's Literature in the Reading Program*, **Emerging Literacy** features an open, "reader friendly" format. Special "Ideas You Can Use" sections focus on practical examples from homes and classrooms. Preschool, kindergarten, and primary teachers, day care providers, parents – anyone interested in helping young children become readers and writers – will want to add this special publication to their "must read" list.

Please send me _____ copies of **Emerging Literacy: Young Children Learn to Read and Write.** Published May 1989
No. 351 170p. ISBN 0-87207-351-3

☐ US$15.00
☐ US$10.00 Discount price for IRA members
☐ For faster delivery by UPS (1-3 weeks), add US$2.00. (UPS ORDERS MUST INCLUDE STREET ADDRESS FOR DELIVERY)

Enclosed is my check payable to IRA for US$ _____

FIRST NAME LAST NAME

STREET ADDRESS

CITY STATE/PROVINCE COUNTRY

POSTAL CODE (ZIP+4)

International Reading Association, 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, Delaware 19714-8139 USA

S18

International Reading Association

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION PR

Please print clearly and limit letters and spaces to the blocks below by abbreviating when necessary.

First Name Initial Last Name

Street Address

City and State or Province

Country Postal Code

Individual Membership for One Year Choice of Membership (please ✓)		† With Book Club
* Basic Membership	US$18.00 ☐	US$63.00 ☐

(Includes all membership benefits with the exception of the journal(s).)

* Journal Membership

Membership with any ONE journal	US$30.00 ☐	US$75.00 ☐
Membership with any TWO journals	US$45.00 ☐	US$90.00 ☐
Membership with any THREE journals	US$60.00 ☐	US$100.00 ☐
Membership with any FOUR journals	US$70.00 ☐	US$110.00 ☐

† The Book Club may be selected as a part of any membership option and provides a convenient means by which members may add to their professional libraries. Members of the Book Club will automatically receive the books and other publications issued during the twelve months of their membership year. (Please note: Certain special edition IRA books, as well as books of other publishers co-distributed by the Association, are not included in Book Club membership. Members will be notified of all books not included in the Book Club.)

* Includes the IRA bimonthly newspaper, READING TODAY.

** For each institutional order, there will be a US$3.00 processing and handling charge.

Choice of Journal(s) (please ✓)

The Reading Teacher (elementary) ☐ Journal of Reading (secondary) ☐

Reading Research Quarterly ☐ Lectura y Vida ☐

NEW ☐ RENEWAL ☐

Method of Payment

Amounts are quoted in terms of U.S. dollars. Equivalent amounts in local currency, based on current rates of exchange, are acceptable.

Check (Payable to IRA) ☐ Visa ☐ Master Card ☐

Credit Card Account Number

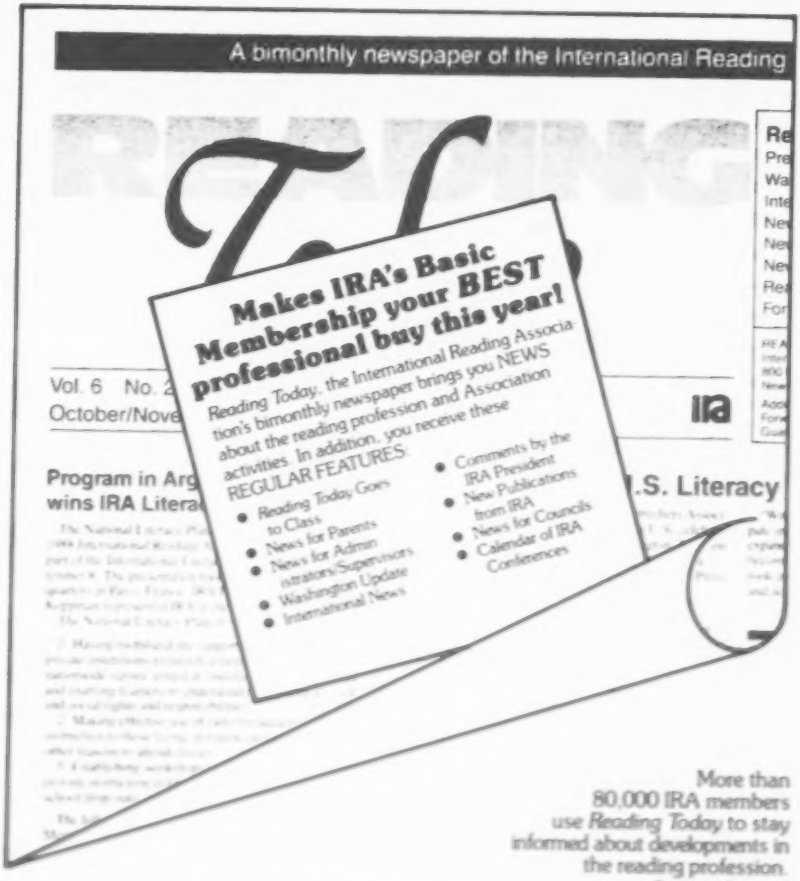
Credit Card Expiration Date — ☐☐ ☐☐

Signature _____

Check or Money Order

When paying by check or money order, enclose this membership form with your check, made payable to IRA, in a stamped envelope and mail to:

INTERNATIONAL READING ASSOCIATION
800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139
Newark, Delaware 19714-8139
USA


A bimonthly newspaper of the International Reading
Vol. 6 No. 2
October/Nove
Program in Arg
wins IRA Litera
.S. Literacy
Makes IRA's Basic Membership your BEST professional buy this year!
Reading Today, the International Reading Association's bimonthly newspaper brings you NEWS about the reading profession and Association activities. In addition, you receive these REGULAR FEATURES:
Reading Today Goes to Class
News for Parents
News for Administrators/Supervisors
Washington Update
International News
Comments by the IRA President
New Publications from IRA
News for Councils
Calendar of IRA Conferences
More than 80,000 IRA members use Reading Today to stay informed about developments in the reading profession.
Join them!
First Name
Initial
Last Name
Street Address
City and State or Province
Country
Postal Code
RT
Basic Membership includes Reading Today, the bimonthly newspaper for reading educators, and all membership benefits with the exception of journals. Individual memberships in Africa, Latin America and Asia (except Japan) are one-half the regular rates.
Basic Membership US$18.00
NEW
RENEWAL
Method of Payment. Amounts are quoted in terms of U.S. dollars. Equivalent amounts in local currency, based on current rates of exchange, are acceptable.
Check (Payable to IRA)
Visa
MasterCard
Credit Card Account Number
Exp. Date
Signature
When paying by check or money order, enclose this form with check payable to IRA, and mail to: International Reading Association, 800 Barksdale Road, PO Box 8139, Newark, DE 19714-8139, USA